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SOUTHERLY

THE MAGAZINE OF
THE AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH ASSOCIATION
SYDNEY

Edited by
R. G. Howarth and A. G. Mitchell

VOLUME ONE
1939-1940

Australasian Medical Publishing Company Limited
Glebe, Sydney

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JOHNSON REPRINT CORPORATION
111 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10003

JOHNSON REPRINT COMPANY LTD.
Berkeley Square House, London, W. 1

First reprinting, 1968, Johnson Reprint Corporation
Printed in the United States of America

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VOLUME ONE, NUMBER ONE.

SEPTEMBER, 1939.

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FOREWORD BY THE EDITOR.

Four years ago the Sydney Branch of the Australian English Association decided to issue a periodical Bulletin which should contain articles and notes of interest to members and others, particularly discussions of current literary topics and of general changes in the language. This Bulletin, having reached its tenth number in April of the present year, now gives place to a magazine which represents not merely an expansion from four pages to forty, but also essentially a new publication, a collection of original literary work both creative and critical, with a place reserved at the end for account of the Association's activities.

Southerly is not simply the official organ of the Association. It is a literary magazine, produced by and issued primarily to members, but designed to interest all who read, all who attempt to write, without being merely "popular" and indiscriminately hospitable. A certain standard of work has been aimed at, and will be preserved throughout the subsequent issues. Since, of necessity, contributions are not paid for, contributors are free to write simply because they have subjects in which they are interested, in which they hope to interest others. At the same time no propaganda of any sort will be admitted, nor will politics, unless they are to form the basis of satire or story which may have more than momentary value. *Southerly* is to serve the causes of literary art, of scholarship (in its broader manifestations), of literary criticism, and, through these as well as by means of direct report and comment, of the Australian English Association.

The objects for which that Association exists are set forth inside the cover of this issue, and will be repeated in those to follow. It is not an academic body, concerned solely with the teaching of English. It exists primarily to maintain the language in Australia and encourage its right use, and therefore is the servant and assistant of all who speak the language and read or contribute to the literature. It is producing this magazine as a venture, in the hope of general support that will enable publication to continue. The members of the Association feel that much can be done for Australian literature by

such means, since the contributors are all Australian or are resident in Australia; they feel also that, by supporting *Southerly*, even if its first number disappoints expectations, Australians will be stimulating the development of their literature and infusing more self-confidence into writers who have too little outlet for their undeniable ability.

No literary journal, no literary review, of any scope, standing, and influence, at present exists in Australia. This is not to depreciate the valiant nationalism of such organs as the *Sydney Bulletin*, or the literary sections of monthlies and quarterlies that, in spite of an abstinence from mere entertainment, continue their lives and do valuable work. But, generally speaking, it remains true that good writers cannot get good literary work published, except perhaps in book form, that conscientious readers cannot readily get careful opinions on new books which must otherwise be taken on trust, and that, altogether, Australian literary interest is suffering severely from a lack of means to display it.

In his experience, both as a teacher and as a critic, the Editor has been continually impressed by the amount of literary talent that in our land and time fusts unused. To give one example (which is not intended to suggest any monopoly of talent): many of the Honours graduates in English at Sydney University would turn naturally to letters if any opportunity offered itself; instead, they enter upon other occupations, and, for lack of regular exercise, the fine edge of their literary sensibility becomes blunted and they use their powers of expression mainly for utilitarian ends. Geniuses one can hope to meet with only rarely, of course; but what appears to be merely talent may be really genius in embryo or disguise. The Editor ventures to claim that the present issue of *Southerly*, containing work by noted Australian writers, by beginners, by general practitioners—by almost every class of writer, in fact—indicates the possibilities of development, if it may not show actual achievement. Of the merits of the collection others may speak: it is necessary to say only that not a single item of it would have been printed if the editorial committee had not been satisfied that it was worth offering to a public which it believes to be ready to appreciate merit and ignore ineptitude.

SOLEMN MASS.

By DAL STIVENS.

DURING the Et Incarnatus she kept her eyes closed. This was what Goethe meant, she thought, what the philosophers meant; what they sought after. Awe, said Goethe, is the highest thing in man, and if the pure phenomenon awakes awe in him he should be content; here is the limit. He can go no further. This then was awe.

At first the music had been a white light in her mind. Music was sweet wine, she thought. Beethoven and the Missa Solennis; Goethe and awe. There had been a wild dancing in her mind as of sunlight upon water. But now a silence had come over the music. She sat with her eyes closed and nothing seemed to take place in her mind. A feeling of amazement, of bewilderment, had stolen over her. But this is beautiful, she thought. This was awe; what the philosophers meant; the thing they sought.

Coming out of the Conservatorium the man with her said: "Well?"

She put her hand on his arm.

"Don't let's go anywhere", she said. "Take me home, Ken."

"Don't you want any supper?"

"I don't feel like it", she said. "I don't want any."

"But you promised."

She said: "I know. But I don't want any."

"I say, Helen", the man said. "You are rather unreasonable."

"Unreasonable?"

"You promised, you know. You said you would go. Why, you wanted to go to that new place. You said you did."

The girl said: "Please, Ken, take me home."

"Have I done anything?"

"No", she said; "you haven't done anything."

"Have I offended you?"

"No", she said; "you haven't offended me. You haven't done anything."

"I must have. What is it?"

She said: "You haven't done anything. Please, Ken, get a taxi for me. I can go home on my own."

"I know I have done something", the man said. "What is it?"

"There isn't anything. Don't ask me to explain. I can't explain."

"You are rather unreasonable, Helen", he said. "I can't understand you."

"You don't have to try", she said.

The man walked into the road and hailed a taxi. It drew up alongside them. It had been raining and drops were clinging to the sides of the taxi. Each drop was a tiny lens.

"Please", she said. "I can go home all right. Don't you come with me. You have an early night."

"I don't want an early night", the man said, loudly.

"All right", the girl said. "You don't want an early night. But don't see me home."

"Listen", the man said, loudly again. "What's got into you? Have I done anything?"

"Oh dear, oh dear", the girl said. "I've said you haven't done anything. You haven't done anything at all. You've been sweet to me."

He said: "So you think I've been sweet to you, do you? That is nice."

"You better get in", the girl said, "if you are going to go on like that."

"Well, well", the man said. "Isn't that nice? Isn't this a fine evening?"

He got in the taxi and gave an address. The girl sat back in a corner. When the driver put out the light her face seemed to glow faintly in the half-darkness. The taxi nosed away from the city and the wet road unwound from the spools of the wheels. Fan-shaped splashes sprang out from under the tyres.

They sat silent.

Presently the man said: "Is there anything wrong, Helen?"

"Wrong?"

He said: "I mean, have I annoyed you in any way?"

"Please, please", the girl said. "Have we got to go into all that again?"

"No", he said. "We don't have to go into that again."

"There you go, getting sarcastic."

"My God", the man said. "I suppose you'll say next it's my fault."

"It isn't anyone's fault."

When they were walking up the steps to her flat, she said: "Don't come in to-night, will you Ken?"

"I wouldn't dream of it."

"There you go again", she said.

She stopped before her door and opened her bag and found the key. When he tried to kiss her she drew away from him.

"I'm sorry, Ken. Not to-night."

He said: "All right. All right."

"I can't explain", she said. "Don't ask me to explain."

He did not say anything.

She said: "I'm sorry, Ken. Not to-night. I don't want you to, to-night. I don't want you to kiss me even. Not to-night. That's why I didn't want you to come home with me. Don't ask me to explain."

She saw him looking at her.

"No", she said. "It isn't that. It isn't that at all. I just don't want to. That's all. Please, don't be cross with me."

"What do you expect me to do?" he said. "Stand on my head for joy?"

"Oh dear, oh dear", she said; "there you go. There you go again."

"What am I supposed to do? Look pleased?"

Afterwards when he had gone she began to cry softly to herself.

LARGE-SIZED MEN.

By DORA WILCOX.

"I see, as in a golden haze of memory—men of large size."

FRANK SWINNERTON.

WHEN Shakespeare put into the mouth of Julius Cæsar the words—

Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights,—

was he expressing a predilection of his own? One feels sure that he had affection for Falstaff, the most original and the most obese of his characters, or he would not have given the old rapsallion a heart large enough for a king to break.

But it was not of Sir John, nor even of Shakespeare, that I was thinking when I walked one morning through King's Cross. I was lost in wonder at the beauty of the world, for the sky was blue and the air still and golden; and as I wandered on, the Darlington scene unrolled itself in a series of pictures. There, through a window, I saw flower-pieces; white roses in a tall vase, zinnias in a blue bowl. Here was a still-life, carefully composed, of salmon smoky-pink against green of lettuce, brown of ryebread, yellow of cheese; then I passed a stall festooned with vine leaves and hanging bunches of grapes, which with its pyramids of fruit looked like a Cubist painting. As for the street itself, it was a portrait gallery. Elderly women with shopping bags, young women with babies, sauntered along enjoying the sunshine. Then I saw a couple of Japanese, and a turbaned Indian, followed by a country man with a cattle dog at his heels, both as bewildered in the city as a townsman in the bush. All these flesh-and-blood presentments of their inner selves were going up, or down, between buildings architecturally poor enough, yet made interesting by reason of the delightful contrast between high-light and shadow upon brick or stone, and the brilliant colour of awnings. And the trees—masterpieces of the Supreme

Artist—how lovely they were! Gazing at blotched stems, and leaves transparent as green silk, I remembered that it was under a plane tree such as these that Sophocles sat and talked with Phædrus on the banks of the Ilissus long ago.

At that moment I saw, coming up from Macleay Street, a man of large size whom I knew. He wore no hat, and his hair was combed sleekly backward. His forehead was not domed like Shakespeare's, nor was he tall, for his massiveness was expressed, like the vastness of the Blue Mountains, horizontally and not vertically. We met, and stopped to pass the time of day, and somehow or other the talk turned on Chesterton, author of "Man Alive". Had I seen the new edition of his poems? No, I hadn't; whereat Christopher Brennan pulled the volume out of his pocket and began to read aloud. Planting himself like an island in the midst of the stream of pedestrians which split in two on one side of him and joined again on the other, he chanted the "Say Against Grocers" from beginning to end:

The wicked grocer groces
In spirits and in wine,
Not frankly, and in fellowship
As men in inns do dine;
But packed with soap and sardines,
And carried off by grooms
For to be snatched by duchesses
And drunk in dressing rooms!

When he had finished, he laughed a jolly laugh.

"Isn't it good!" he said.

That was the last time I saw Brennan, and it is pleasant to have this picture of him in one's memory—to see the scholar and poet, whose mind so often roamed into dark and solitary places, standing happily under a plane tree in golden air.

And when Chesterton also crossed the Styx—Charon must have had a hard time of it ferrying these two over, since their souls were weighty and quite unlike the attenuated ghosts of most of us—I think that Brennan was waiting to welcome him. Theirs would be a joyous meeting, and with what talk and laughter they would pace side by side over meadows carpeted with flowers of which ours on earth are

but painted copies! And since, according to Virgil, "cheerful souls feast there upon the plain", it seems probable that Brennan would lead the newcomer to an Elysian inn built for the refreshment of large-sized travellers. Sir John Falstaff is the host, so it is said, and certainly Sancho Panza, and the Fat Boy of Dickens, aroused from lethargy by the accident of death, are amongst the servitors. As for those who wear a lean and hungry look, they are not admitted, and another place has been provided for them. But Brennan would lead Chesterton in, and, seating themselves amongst goodly company, they would eat of heaped-up ambrosia and wash it down with prodigious draughts of nectar, for poets are as gods.

And when night fell—if night ever does fall in those regions—they would stroll to the edge of the plateau and look down, not up, at the pale stars and wonder from which gleamlet they had come.

But Chesterton would be the first to lift up his eyes to the mountain at whose foot lies the inn and see the City of Eternal Light, ultimate goal of mankind, which crowns its summit. In that city there are mansions spacious enough to house imaginations too large for the confines of our earth.

Love is cruel to the lover,
 To the loved it brings distress;
 Spite of legend it is truly
 A fantastic happiness.

Shall we turn and try to master
 It before it masters us?
 Be as neighbours, comrades, only,
 And conclude our loving, thus?

No! we'd curse the care of friendship,
 And this truth of nature prove:
 Much the worst of tyrants is the
 Obligation not to love.

R. G. HOWARTH.

HARDY'S THE HAND OF ETHELBERTA.

By A. J. A. WALDOCK.

HARDY'S progress as novelist, traced on a chart, would have a very erratic look: who could have been prepared for the precipitous descent from the *Madding Crowd* to *The Hand of Ethelberta*? This is perhaps the least characteristic of his novels; he is trying to do what does not suit him, is never really at home with his subject, and the very cleverness of what he achieves fails to attract because we feel it to be a cleverness alien to his nature. Hardy (we know from what Mrs. Hardy has told us) worried himself unduly at times about his social responsibilities as a purveyor of fiction: was not the right material for a novel the fashionable life of the day? And should he not—despite his misgivings—attempt to grapple with the prescribed theme? *The Hand of Ethelberta* is his attempt. The story is full of ingenuity and has its brilliant scenes, but when we compare it with other books in which the presence of Hardy is really felt, it seems to us a shadow-show. "A high degree of probability was not attempted in the arrangement of the incidents": so, later, he confessed; indeed, nowhere else has so much to be taken on the author's assertion; the material does not develop itself, it is arbitrarily manipulated. But the characters are not satisfactory either—can we understand, from what we have learned of their natures, how the union of Julian and Picotee came about? As for Ethelberta herself, though her adventurous course is full of interest, we certainly do not know her as we know Elfride or Viviette.

Yet the book holds one's curiosity, partly because for Hardy it is so remarkable—if we will, so mistaken—a departure: it lies so far aside from his true path that it is interesting to see what will happen. His skill, in the event, is a little surprising. He transports us into a Veneering-like world of high life and can elicit the comedy of its Neighs and Mountcleres with many a lively touch. The strokes are as often as not ironic, and the caustic edge to his commentary

results in some good passages. Who would have expected from him a description quite in this vein—or, indeed, have suspected that he had quite the gift required for its writing? Ethelberta sings (the scene is a drawing room in “a house on the north side of Hyde Park”) :

“Some were so interested that, instead of continuing their conversation, they remained in silent consideration of how they would continue it when she had finished; while the particularly civil people arranged their countenances into every attentive form that the mind could devise. One emotional gentleman looked at the corner of a chair as if, till that moment, such an object had never crossed his vision before; the movement of his finger to the imagined tune was, for a deaf old clergyman, a perfect mine of interest; whilst a young man from the country was powerless to put an end to an enchanted gaze at nothing at all in the exact middle of the room before him. Neigh, and the general phalanx of cool men and celebrated club yawners, were so much affected that they raised their chronic look of great objection to things, to an expression of scarcely any objection at all.”

So, too, it is interesting to observe the number of opportunities he finds, in this uncongenial material, for those minute discriminations which elsewhere come so easily from him: his perceptiveness is diverted, but it still functions. He cannot now speak of the “worn whisper, dry and papery” of the heath-bells; but he can describe the sound of Lady Petherwin’s pen: “there were two large antique rings on her forefinger, against which the quill rubbed in moving backwards and forwards, thereby causing a secondary noise rivalling the primary one of the nib upon the paper.” And if he is cut off from hazel groves and the effect of slanting light through their leaves, he will note instead how the gleams from under the candle-shade “caught, lost, and caught again” the outlying threads of Mr. Neigh’s burnished beard. There is much occasion, as well, for the rendering of facial expressions, and we have many an amusing sketch: generally the effect is like a few swift pencilled lines of caricature—taking off, say, the progress of Neigh’s stifled yawn which at first, “secretly wrestling with his jaw”, he prevents, and which presently,

when it beats him, he still courteously "confined within his person to such an extent that only a few unimportant symptoms, such as reduced eyes and a certain rectangular manner of mouth in speaking, were visible".

The style has this lightness a good deal of the time, and absorbs the more readily the scattered dicta, which often have the polish of epigram. The presence of these is a sign, no doubt, of incomplete fusion, but they agree well with the tone of the novel, and, in any case, would we willingly surrender them? Hardy might often be drawing without change on the wisdom of his notebooks: "Ordinary powers exhibited in a new way effect as much as extraordinary powers exhibited in an old way"; or again: "Folk must continually strain to advance in order to remain where they are". Faith's opinion has value, for it is not that of a woman merely, but "impersonally human": "to have an unsexed judgment is as precious as to be an unsexed being is deplorable". And there are opportunities for him to speak upon the nature of women and of love (he is always worth listening to when he does so): "New love is brightest, and long love is greatest; but revived love is the tenderest thing upon earth".

On the whole, though, we miss far more than we gain. Now and then we meet a passage that is genuinely characteristic: the scene in which the sportsmen, sheltering in their hut, watch Picotee as she approaches and retreats from and re-approaches the signpost ("where nothing particular is going on, one incident makes a drama") is one; and another—which might belong to any of the typical novels, but which seems almost a violence here—is the description of Ethelberta's gruesome discovery as she explores the estate of her suitor; but these scenes are exceptional. In its main drift the novel is what Hardy himself called it, an "interlude".

SOUTHERLY

AUSTRALIA DESERTA.

Dry leaves in thin wind
 Whisper the lean
 Dogstar days
 With dust between
 Petal and sepal,
 Bud and stem,
 Withering
 This diadem.

Belief in the thin days:
 Wind and brittle
 Sands that wear us
 Little and little,
 Our proper figure
 Under the storm
 Smoothed to a surface
 Uniform.

The sand has his own
 Wave and motion,
 Rages the bed
 Of the stony ocean.
 We build no ark
 For a second flood:
 Contented under
 Solitude.

S. MUSGROVE.

REQUIEM.

When I am gone, remember this of me:
 That in these gardens, where my ashes lie,
 The roses bloom; and if their petals bear
 A richer hue, a perfume more divine,
 You'll know my restless soul has sought and found
 This way, to send its boundless love to thine.

ERNEST WARBURTON.

SECURITY.

By KYLIE TENNANT.

THE only camping place at Barnamon was a stretch of baked red earth beside the showground. Two scrawny gum trees stood apart, drooping like poor horses, their leaves so few you could count them over the bare ribbed branches. There was a shallow dam, its edge always pitted by the sharp prints of sheep, but the bagmen took their water from the big iron tank behind the showground sheds. There was no feed at the camp, no shade, only flies and heat and dust and sometimes grass seeds blown through the barbed wire fence. Nothing to see except the back view of a few iron sheds and the road to Barnamon and the railway line lying across the flat like a gridiron waiting for something to fry.

An old-age pensioner called Dick Coyle had the only camp there, a humpy made of bits of sacking and rusty tin collected from the rubbish heap. Dick had had money fifty years ago, when Barnamon was a gold-rush town, but now at eighty-three he lived on his pound a week pension, supporting a little fox-terrier bitch and her extravagant litters of puppies.

"Eh, Baby, Baby", he would say, shaking his white beard in pretended despair whenever a fresh litter arrived, "ain't you got no more sense, girl?" And the little bitch would cock her intelligent ears and lick his hand lovingly. "I can't provide for 'em", Dick would say reprovingly. "At eighty-three, Baby, you can't expect me to do it."

Baby and her puppies were the old man's one pleasure and interest. He would talk to the dog through the empty hours between one frugal meal of bread and tea and the next, crooning to her as though she were a child. Sometimes there would be a bagman unrolling his swag in the stables, and Dick would hobble over to have a "bit of a pitch", as he termed it, with the stranger. Sometimes a family in a van would come through and might stop a few days "biting" the town, selling artificial flowers, or jug covers, or some other small

article that gave a licence for begging. They all knew old Dick and would call to him cheerfully.

"How goes it, Dick? How's Baby?" And he would reply, nodding his white beard, that Baby was a bonny wee thing and great company to a man. The campers all liked old Dick. He would share his last crust with anyone, or his last stick of fire-wood, which was even more important on a baked-up flat where a stick of wood was as rare as a gold nugget. Dick paid a young fellow two shillings of his pension to bring him wood, and it had to be hoarded to make it last, but he would always limp over to any turnout which might draw into the camp and say: "Now you can bring your billy over to me fire, missus, any time yer like. I ain't got much, but I've usually got a bit of fire."

He was believed to be a miser, and the tale went that Dick had a jam tin buried somewhere about his hut full of bank notes. Dick was rather fearfully aware of this legend, and he always took the first opportunity to affirm his destitution. "Some of the crowd that's travelling these days", he muttered to Baby, "would murder you for sixpence. That they would, girl."

He had gone over to the Murrays in his usual way when their turnout drew in and answered enquiries about wood and water.

"Ye might get a paddock for your horses if ye see the cocky a bit of the way up the road", he volunteered. "You tell him old Dick Coyle sent ye. He's friendly to me, is Mr. Hogan."

"Any chance of a handout there?" the man who was unharnessing the horses asked, carelessly.

"Well, that I don't know", Dick answered. He never asked for anything himself. He paid his way, owing the storekeeper money perhaps, but only until next pension day. He would have died before he touched anything that didn't belong to him.

A few days of the Murrays was enough to show that they did not share this view. The woman was a big, shrill-voiced, slatternly half-caste, with a swarm of children, who screamed

and fought or made forays on the neighbourhood in search of fruit or vegetables to steal. The man did little except drink and quarrel with his wife. They had a pack of half-starved kangaroo dogs as quarrelsome and thievish as themselves.

"You have bad neighbours this time, Dick", the sergeant of police said, as he slowed down his car beside the tin and bag humpy to exchange his usual 'good-day' with the old man.

"I know that, sergeant", Dick grunted, "but Baby and me, we don't mind 'em. We keep to ourselves and say nothing, don't we, Baby?"

It would not do him any good, he reminded himself, to be seen talking with the sergeant. A man all too soon got a reputation as a police pimp. Only that day he had missed two shillings from the tin on the meat safe, where he had always confidently kept his few pence.

That was not the worst of it. He had saved up enough to buy himself a plum-cake, a luxury he dearly loved, and the day before the plum-cake had been left in its tin on the table. When he came home from the post office where he drew his pension, there were only a few crumbs in the bottom of the tin.

"Its the biggest Murray girl", he told Baby, "and the boy, the dark one. No dogs could of done it, Baby. They wouldn't put the lid on again."

To complain to the sergeant would get him a bad name among the campers. He could see the Murrays watching from behind their van. The woman was saying something to the man, who nodded significantly.

"Good day to you, sergeant", old Dick said cautiously, and as the sergeant drew off he stroked Baby lovingly. "We don't want any trouble, do we, girl?"

There was worry and loneliness in his voice. He was an old man; his hands trembled in spite of himself, a thin trickle of spittle ran down his beard. He didn't want any trouble.

There was the big girl, with her unwinking black eyes like a snake, and the boy with his protruding teeth, always coming to his little hut, asking for wood, asking for food, mauling the puppies, impudent, shrill, abusive.

"Hey, Dick, gimme something to eat. I'm hungry."

"Gimme a penny, Dick."

"I wanna drink of water."

"Mother says have you got any tea." And they would snatch it without a word of thanks and make off.

But it was when he missed his dog chain that old Dick grew really angry. He was old and he did not want any trouble, but there were limits to what a man could endure. He went over to the Murrays' camp and shook his stick almost in the woman's face.

"I ain't said nothing about the two shillings, Mrs. Murray", he panted. "I ain't saying nothing about the plum-cake, as fine a plum-cake as a man ever saved up to buy. But if I don't get Baby's chain back I'll tell the p'lice on them kids. A man's got to protect them that's dependent on him, and stealing the chain of a poor dumb creature . . ." He paused for breath. "You keep your damn kids out of my camp, you keep them away", he stammered furiously.

"I'll have you know you're talking to a respectable married woman", Mrs. Murray screamed at him. "You can't come here to my camp abusin' me."

"I ain't said nothing about you, married or unmarried. It's the kids. You keep them to yourself."

Next morning, when he woke, he found the dog chain had been flung in the entrance of the hut, and he breathed a sigh of relief. It was Hogan, usually the most lenient of men, who finally did go to the police about the Murray children. Hogan had become accustomed to bagmen helping themselves to fruit from his trees, and he had tolerated the picking of peas from his pea patch. But the Murray children did not pick peas. They tore the plants up by the roots. They did not pick cherries. They broke the boughs off the trees. The sergeant had had other complaints. He decided to bring in the eldest boy and girl to the police station and overawe them with a lecture in the charge room. He had the scene all set. Himself, impressive but kindly, behind the big table, with his gold-rimmed glasses and his watch laid before him, the constable standing in the doorway, everything very official.

The sergeant had not reckoned on the girl snatching his watch and spectacles from the table and bolting with them. Or

the boy slipping under the constable's arm and making off after his sister. It was two days before the culprits were found, and during that time the sergeant had got in touch with the child welfare department and it was decided to remove the eldest girl and her brother to a home. Mrs. Murray was like a tigress deprived of her young. She raged about the flat, she screamed abuse at old Dick, on whom she blamed this blow.

"Spying damned old p'lice pimp", she shouted. "Crawling off to tell lies about my kids, you sneaking old mongrel. I'll get you for this, you see if I don't."

Finally the Murrays packed their van, hurriedly collected the rest of the children, harnessed the horses and drove away in a cloud of dust, Mrs. Murray still mad with rage and hate.

The following night old Dick felt Baby scratching frantically at his chest. He had kept her with him in the hut for company. He was usually a heavy sleeper and it was with an effort he opened his eyes. Then with a cry he seized his clothes and flung himself through the doorway just in time. The hut was burning like matchwood, the old sacking flaring up in a puff of black smoke and flame. All his little cherished possessions, the chair he had made from soap boxes, the table, his bed and bedding and blankets, were a heap of ashes. There was left but a few blackened bits of tin and charred wood.

"A log must have fallen out of the fire", the old man lied to the sergeant, who called next day. "It was just one of them accidents."

"You're lucky the dog woke you", the sergeant said, bending down to pat the little animal. "I guess nothing will be too good for her now, eh?"

"As long as I live", old Dick declared fervently, "she'll have the best life that any dog ever had."

But when the sergeant had gone a great sense of fear and desolation overcame him. As long as he lived . . . Yes. But suppose he died. "That woman", he mumbled to himself, "she'll never forget, Baby. She blames me for them kids." It was the look in the woman's eyes as she said: "I'll get you for this, you old mongrel." And she would get him.

He set about rebuilding his hut, slowly, with a trembling, disheartened apathy. What did it matter where or how he sheltered? When you are young and strong, with life in front of you, he thought, security doesn't mean so much. You can do without a family, or friends, or a home. But when you are old, you need someone to care for you, someone to stand by you, to help and comfort you. He patted the small white head laid against his knee.

"As long as I have you, Baby", he murmured, "you bonny wee thing . . ."

There were one or two bagmen camped in the sheds and they came over to view the ruins.

"Had a bit of trouble, mate?" one of them asked sympathetically. He shook his head when Dick mentioned the Murrays. "They're a rotten crowd", he agreed. "They was camped at Coota last year and I know for a fact that they poisoned old Joe Davis's dogs. Drov'in' he was and they camped just near him. I heard them say meself that they'd put baits in the camp." He spat. "That's the nigger in them. Poisoning a man's dogs! Can't beat that, can you? If Davis ever sees them he'll put a bullet in the woman."

Old Dick said nothing.

"Here", the bagman said, "I'll give you a hand."

They went to work on the hut. The structure, when completed, more resembled a V-shaped dog kennel. A man had to bend half double to creep into it. Perhaps it would keep out the rain, if ever it rained at Barnamon again, but it did not seem likely. The heat struck down like a steel club, beating everything flat and rolling it out red hot. The old man felt very sick. He lay on a heap of leaves and old straw, trying to gather enough strength to walk into the town.

"I'm well known", he thought. "Well liked. I've never owed anyone nothing, except the storekeeper. Maybe someone would let me stay in a shed near a house where there are people handy all the time." The craving to be of importance to some human being, to be cared for, took him like a pain. He could not sleep at night for the fear that again he would wake choking to see the fire almost on top of him. Or perhaps

he would not wake? "While I have Baby", he muttered, "I'm all right. Eh, she's a bonny wee thing."

It was about a fortnight after the fire that a motor caravan drove on to the camping ground and a man and a woman got out and began to busy themselves with preparations. Dick watched them from his doorway, interested, for this was the first motor caravan he had seen close. It was a big luxurious affair and the man and woman matched the car. Prosperous, well-dressed people, who carried a patent fuel stove and expensive folding tables and chairs. They were independent of wood and water or humble help from old men. It was with a sense of surprise that Dick saw the woman coming towards him.

"That's a nice little dog you have", she said. She was a plump woman with a big pleasant face and well-kept hands, a kind woman from the look of her. "What do you call her?"

"Baby's her name, missus", Dick said proudly. "The best dog in the whole world. Eh, I wouldn't part with that dog for quids."

They were friends almost immediately. Dick drew out a box for his visitor to sit on, he offered tea from a dirty blackened billy, and the newcomer accepted with an inward shudder. She admired Baby wholeheartedly and fondled the puppies. She heard all about the Murrys and the fire.

"We'll be here over to-morrow, Mr. Coyle", she told him. "My husband travels for a drapery firm and he has some business to do in Barnamon." She rose to go. "I'm in love with your dog", she said over her shoulder. "Any time you want to part with her . . ." She laughed as she saw the look on his face. "But I know you'd never part with the dear little thing."

When the woman had gone, Dick sat smoking for a long time, and thinking. Eighty-three was a fair age. The Murrys might leave him alone, they might never trouble him again; but suppose he died, any time, any way, who would look after Baby? A man should provide for his dependants. Here am I, he thought, with no chick nor child nor wife. I've led a good life and I don't regret anything. I'd live the same if I

started over again to-morrow. Gold-digging, droving, harvesting, drinking, riding, fighting, following cattle, timber-getting—he had tried his hand at most things. But he had no money to leave to anyone. He could not say: “As long as you look after Baby there’s so much a week coming to you.” Pictures rose in his mind of Baby sitting beside his dead body whining a little fearfully, running round for him to the puppies and then trotting back again. Pictures of Baby skulking around streets looking for something to eat in garbage cans, her bones showing through the dirty coat that he always kept so white and clean. People would be saying: “That’s old Dick’s dog, poor thing.” And then she would be mangy, sore, creeping into a patch of shade, hunted away, kicked. The children would throw stones at her. Tears started in his eyes. A man owed it to his dependants to provide security. And then the Murrys. They threw poisoned baits in a man’s camp once. Suppose they poisoned Baby? They would be back. It did not matter what happened to him, because he was an old man. Baby was different.

In the morning he limped over to the caravan and stood hesitating at a little distance.

“Good morning, Mr. Coyle”, the woman called. “I was just coming over to ask if you would like some of these sausages.”

She was kind, and in the morning light there was a pleasant look of home about the motor caravan, with its crisp little curtains and expensive fittings.

“Missus.” Old Dick hesitated. “That there little dog of mine. Did you mean it when you said you’d like her, eh?”

“Why, of course I meant it. I’ve got two little boys at home.” The woman smiled. “We’d think the world of her.”

“And the puppies, missus.” Dick was troubled. “Would you take the puppies too?”

The woman hesitated. “Why, yes”, she said. “But, of course, you wouldn’t part with Baby, Mr. Coyle?”

“I’ve been thinking”, Dick mumbled. “She’s a bonny wee thing.”

"But I wouldn't take her from you", the woman declared hastily, "knowing what she means to you."

"I ain't staying here", Dick lied in a sullen tone. "I've had an offer to go and stay with some people in Barnamon. I'm well liked there. Never owed anyone nothing except the storekeeper until a Thursday. I'm well liked. I've got a lot of friends."

"I'm sure you have, Mr. Coyle."

"It's only Baby. Where I'm going they can't take her. They've got other dogs."

It was late in the afternoon when the caravan bumped across the ruts towards the road. Baby was looking anxiously back towards her master, where he sat in the doorway of his humpy smoking impassively. The old man did not even raise a hand in farewell. "Mustn't unsettle 'er", he muttered. For a long time he sat there smoking. The same bagman who had known the Murrays in Cootamundra strolled towards him from the showground.

"How is it, mate?" he called.

Dick nodded. "Not so bad."

The other man lowered his voice. "I seen Tom Murray", he said, "and you want to watch out, mate. The old woman's got her knife into you. They're a nasty gang to get up against."

"Thanks", old Dick said in a firm strong voice, almost the voice of a young man. "But it don't matter now."

"Well", the other man shrugged, "it's your look-out."

He squatted down on his heels and began to grumble monotonously about the hungry track, the poor cockies, the infrequency of handouts and the frequency of gaol terms. The dusk turned to dark as he talked.

Long after he had left the old man sat alone in the little black opening of the humpy. The gaunt tree near the fence laid its shadow towards the dam as though it would crawl like a black snake to water. There was a wearied bleat from the sheep a drover had brought in, and the air smelt of their rank fleece. It was thick and heavy, as though it had driven with the sheep all the long hot afternoon across the burning plains

and was resting exhausted. The railway line showed faintly under the moon and the few lights of the town of Barnamon were dim, as if they shone through a dusty pane.

A long time the old man sat there, his head on his chest, his white beard spread, his empty pipe clutched in one hand. Then he started and looked round apprehensively. There was only the moonlight and the dusty sheep and the black shadow of the tree.

L'AVEUGLE-NÉE.

(Of the Order of Blind Sisters, Paris.)

Virgin in whose low sky was never noon,
Star-sowing twilight, or star-reaping dawn,
Or April's rainbows, sudden as her showers,
Or, when June's leaping, petalled fire was drawn,
The flames reversed of autumn's eerie leaves,
Or winter-tide's thrice-constellate, bickering eves:

If eyes that never gleaned an outward ray
May see no dream-light through their slumbers creep,
What lutany of dreams invisible,
That beggars all the pomps of Asian sleep,
Enraptures still that ever-listening face
Through noon remembering the midnight's grace?

O hidden strings of uncreated lutes,
O music trembling down sleep's spaceless air,
O love exalted to such fervid peace
That life becomes an ecstasy of prayer,
How manifest, that for the shuttered sense
Such kisses of the Spouse are recompense!

Calm bride of Christ, from your first hour arrayed
In closer veil than Carmel's anchorite,
Grieving, how would we wrong your blessedness,
Who dwell beyond the shadow of our light!
Pray you for us, clear, world-sequestered soul,
Since surely it is we who would be whole.

F. J. H. LETTERS.

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS AND POETRY.

By A. D. HOPE.

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS has invaded literary criticism more and more in the last few years. It has undertaken to explain, sometimes the work of the artist as in Freud's analysis of Wilhelm Jensen's *Gradiva*, sometimes the personality of the artist as in Laforgue's *The Defeat of Baudelaire*, and sometimes artistic activity and the satisfaction that art gives, as in Rank's *Der Künstler*. If the psycho-analyst could stop at explanation no one would object. The trouble is that he cannot resist finding in his bag of tricks either a recipe for art or a criterion to decide for us what is good art and what is bad.

An example of this was Mr. J. A. Passmore's comparison a few years ago of Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" with Arthur Symonds's translation of Baudelaire's "Parfum Exotique". "Kubla Khan" he condemned as a bad poem because psycho-analysis revealed it to be a sexual fantasy masquerading as a work of art. "Parfum Exotique" won his approval because it was a work of art depicting a sexual fantasy. The first is a distorted presentation of real things and the second is a real presentation of distorted things, the first marked by a determination to enjoy what is of a certain nature whether it is true or not, the second by a determination to discover what is true, no matter what its nature.* Of course, as he points out, most psycho-analysts believe that they can show that *all* poetry is of the first kind. But Mr. Passmore's application of psycho-analysis to criticism, just because it *is* better than the usual psycho-analytic arguments, deserves to be examined and refuted, for it illustrates the fact that even at their best such theories are both silly and useless.

In the first place he was apparently not aware that the poem he quoted was not a translation at all. Most of it is a rough parody and the very lines on which the psycho-analytic

* J. A. Passmore: "Psycho-Analysis and Æsthetics", *Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy*, June, 1936.

interpretation is based are by Arthur Symons and have no counterpart in Baudelaire:

An idle island where the unnatural scheme
Of Nature is by savourous fruits oppressed,
And where men's bodies are their women's guest
And women's bodies are not what they seem.

may represent 'the lover who finds in passion a return to his mother's womb', and doubtless the facts of Baudelaire's sex-life and his relations with his mother would afford some evidence. The only flaw in the argument is that Baudelaire actually wrote:

Une île paresseuse où la nature donne
Des arbres singuliers, et des fruits savoureux,
Des hommes dont le corps est mince et vigoureux
Et des femmes dont l'oeil par sa franchise étonne.

If we need an explanation of this, it seems to be no more than a series of impressions partly gathered from his reading but closely modelled on his recollections of the island of Mauritius, where he spent a few weeks in 1841 and which became a haunting memory that constantly recurs in his poetry. Probably he is addressing his coloured mistress Jeanne Duval, which accounts for the association, since both she and this island were connected with his love of the exotic and the bizarre. Now, of course, no respectable psycho-analyst would stop here. He would be able, as Laforgue has done, to give a full explanation of the underlying sexual fantasy from what he knows of Baudelaire in other ways, i.e., biographical information not in the poem itself. He could show that the poem is romantic: "The perfume of my mistress awakens a picture of an island, etc., fails to recognise the true nature of the fantasy. It is therefore bad art." Yet can we be sure whether Baudelaire is indicating the nature of the fantasy or not on the evidence of the poem itself?

Here is the first weakness of the psycho-analytic criterion: Only a few poems give us enough evidence to use the criterion. Short poems are specially difficult to interpret with certainty. "Kubla Khan" and Symons's parody of Baudelaire appear to be hand-picked examples. For most poems we shall have to go through the long process of psycho-analysing, not the poem, but the poem and its writer. What would a psycho-analyst

say of the practice of interpreting dreams without any knowledge of the dreamer? He would be the first to admit that his interpretation of many poems can only be a guess. As a matter of fact he is nearly always compelled to fall back on the evidence of biography.

This biographical interpretation is the second weakness. Suppose that Coleridge had given his poem the following title: "Kubla Khan: An illustration of a typical Intra-Uterine Fantasy" and that the author of *The Road to Xanadu* had shown it to be based on an illustration from Freud's "Die Traumdeutung". There would have been no doubt then that the poem was a work of art depicting a sexual fantasy. What was bad art would then be seen to be good art. It is his biographical knowledge that allows the psycho-analyst to be sure that Coleridge could not possibly have written the poem in this spirit. He is judging the poem as art by something outside the poem altogether. Where this biographical evidence is lacking he has to resort to analysing, not the writer's motives and intentions, but the reader's interpretation. Experiment has shown* how difficult it is for readers not to find their pet theories in poems which afford no real evidence for the belief. It appears to me that the psycho-analyst, like other uncritical readers, often does just this. He analyses his own reactions to the poem and attributes them to the poem itself and its author. He may sometimes be right, but his method is nearly always wrong. He may have a criterion of art, but it is useless because in most cases he cannot apply it without begging the question.

His criticism is nearly always one-eyed. Let us admit for the moment that Coleridge's and Baudelaire's poems are bad art in the sense given and that Arthur Symonds's is good. We have the absurd situation of a piece of feeble doggerel claimed to be better than its meticulous and felicitous original. We have admitted a taste that can prefer lines like:

Guided by thine odour towards the heat of veils
to the delicious mastery of verse which Coleridge displays. I do not see how we should be able to choose between a fine poem which was psycho-analytically impeccable and a close but crude

* I. A. Richards: "Practical Criticism", 1935 (Kegan Paul).

paraphrase of it. A poem is a complex thing. It is not valuable only in one way. Whatever the value of the attitude to facts revealed by the three poems, there is a sense in which Symons's poem is very bad art and Coleridge's is good. If we ignore that sense then poetry is a word without meaning.

The real objection to the psycho-analytic criterion of art, however, is that it bolsters muddled thinking: the so-called positive or realistic æsthetics.* Argument about the real nature of art or beauty or æsthetic emotion, is very similar to medieval arguments about the real nature of God. It is an attempt to find the 'true' application of a word by an examination of the different ways in which it is used. In criticism we are familiar with similar futile arguments in the attempt to define the 'true nature' of poetry, comedy and so on by looking for a common element in works so described. This has a specious appearance of scientific method. But it is not scientific because it assumes out of hand that the word must have some coherent meaning.

All we know is that we write for a number of reasons and that we get satisfaction from writing in a number of different ways. Psycho-analysis indicates the source of some of these satisfactions. Scientific method consists in collecting, naming and comparing these satisfactions. It has not yet discovered or demonstrated a specific æsthetic satisfaction. In fact wherever we examine a so-called æsthetic satisfaction we cannot be sure that it could not be analysed into something else: the satisfaction of a wish for escape, a satisfaction of curiosity about things, the vicarious satisfaction of a multitude of emotions and motives which originally had other objects. We can, of course, arbitrarily label one of these satisfactions æsthetic—say the satisfaction of finding out things—but the name adds nothing and means nothing more than that in this way we indicate the kind of satisfaction we prefer to get from writing. It in no way determines that one kind of satisfaction is false and another true. If whisky gives me one kind of satisfaction and roast beef another, I cannot claim that one is a true gustatory satisfaction and the other false. So it is with romantic and realistic poems. The fact that I cannot live on whisky and that I will ruin my health if I drink too much is

* John Anderson: "Psycho-Analysis and Romanticism", *Australasian Journal of Philosophy and Psychology*, September, 1936.

no argument against enjoying a glass when I want it. When the psycho-analyst tells me that "Kubla Khan" is the literature of escape from reality, he is only telling me that it is literary whisky—not that it is bad whisky. When he tells me that Arthur Symonds's poem reveals the true nature of fantasy he is only telling me that this is nourishing food. He neglects to add that it is so badly cooked and served that my belly turns over at the sight of it. I thank him for his information. If it is true he may help me to clear away some of the absurd moral and cultural theories that prevent me knowing my various enjoyments in literature for what they are. But I won't allow him to become a literary pussyfoot and impose his prejudices on me in the name of some suspect system of morals which he calls science.

The common element in poetry, if we can discern one at all, is not the satisfactions it gives, but particular use of language to evoke and communicate an attitude, an emotional point of view. Whether these attitudes are to true or false experience is irrelevant to writing as an art. The success of a poet is to be judged not by the truth of what he says but by the success with which he can make us feel what he felt. Good and bad art are coherent terms only in the sense of mastery of means to this end.

Bring me a thyrsus, waiter
(I would be reprobate);
Bring me a glass of water
And sunlight on a plate.

And take a message, waiter,
For the big man overhead:
Loudly (he may not hear you)
Tell him the gods are dead.

I came too late: for wine and truth
Are closed to me at six;
And soon the vines and I shall be
As dry as attic sticks.

RONALD DUNLOP.

WEST DEAN.

Since first a Sabbath bell
Was heard in this warm dell,
 The English here
 From year to year
Their fields and flocks have tended—
 And now 'tis ended.

The generations bred
Successors in their stead,
 Then to the earth
 Which gave them birth
Ungrudgingly descended—
 And now 'tis ended.

Wars were afar; but here
Their passage cast no fear,
 Where nothing strange
 Has wrought a change,
But broken still was mended—
 And now 'tis ended.

I dreamt I was in England
 And heard the cuckoo call,
And watched an English summer
 From spring to latest fall,
 And understood it all.

I dreamt my feet were dusty
 With dust of English lanes,
From walking through the counties
 And healing of my pains
 With summer suns and rains.

I dreamt the war was over
 And England calm and free,
And I lay there in England
 Beneath a broad yew-tree,
 Contented there to be.

ENOCH POWELL.

THARLE.

By JO HOWARTH.

THE young prince sat moodily on his meditation carpet, which was of fine gold filigrane embroidered with six hundred pearls, all chosen with such care that they resembled exactly the skin of Nashta, the dancing girl whose beauty was spoken of throughout the harems of ten kingdoms.

Her eyes, it was rumoured, were clearer and purer in colour than any of the sapphires in the young prince's vast treasure-vaults, and her hair was two shades lighter than the yellow topazes studded around his gold wine-cup.

Nashta danced in the tiniest sandals in the world, and her gown was stitched with miraculously coloured beetles; but although it was so fine as to be more transparent than water through which the white limbs of swimmers are luminously seen, and although her glance swept other men to madness, nothing could dispel his mood, and the young prince sat silently with his olive-coloured hands folded across his knees.

Now Yelishti (for such was his earthly name) had everything that could be culled from the rich and fragrant places of the earth. A thousand slaves had perished to bring great scarlet orchids from the steamy jungles, and those who survived were mutilated with silver knives that they might not speak of their journey. Long golden grapes he had, and grapes of ruby; blood-red pomegranates for the white teeth of Nashta; exotic perfumes that gave insatiable desire to the user; and a thick green wine which was even more potent than the sacred drink of the invisible god in the sanctuary.

Fabulous tapestries he had, embroidered with strange and terrible stories of the tall brown women who scorned men and took panthers to mate; of the long-haired yellow men who were possessed of a gem which when placed in the lips of a dead virgin would drain the moon of its lustre; and of the little men who were wont to hollow out an emerald

and use it for a couch. Also on those tapestries there was the fantastic legend of the Sultan's cat, whose eyes were of such peculiar and piercing radiance that no secret, however sinister, and no thought, however cunningly concealed, could remain hidden from them. Even the swarthy men on the farthest side of the earth, who daily sacrificed two hundred flower-crowned maidens, shuddered when they heard how the Sultan's wives pitted their wits against this cat, and sooner or later met the same fate, and their lovers with them. An unenviable fate, it was said, devised with great ferocity and feline cunning.

The young prince had treasure-vaults that were filled to overflowing with so many jewels that they spilled out of the palace and into the jungle, and the boughs of the trees were interlaced with moonstones and cornelians, with hyacinths and diamonds, with a white stone that turned scarlet by moonlight, and a scarlet stone that turned white by sunlight, and even the couches of his slaves were studded with balas rubies and chrysolites.

So Yelishti craved not jewels or fine silks or rare wines, or for that matter coveted not anything but the eyes of the great cat which was living its interminable life in the perfumed harems of the Sultan.

He craved these eyes, and he craved so much that his treasures were as many baubles, and the tiny dancing feet, the warm lips and the love of Nashta, the most beautiful woman in ten kingdoms, no longer gave him solace, and her breasts grew cold under his listless fingers.

For many days he crouched on his meditation carpet. The pale-skinned lute-players murmured softly in corners, and the sleek eunuchs hushed the chattering of the palace women. For many days there was silence in the banqueting halls, and sadness in the palace of utmost pleasure, where Nashta waited in vain for his coming. There was silence through the long perfumed corridors, till he rose at last and rang three times a golden bell that was filched from a far-off temple; and before the last chime died away a strange thing happened.

No one saw Tharle slide out of his little dark house by the indigo waterway, no one saw the gleam of oil on his naked body, for he left no shadow, and he made no sound, and only a solitary star picked out the glitter of gems on his small poniard.

On the third chime of the bell which was his summons, Tharle, the wiliest thief, the craftiest thug in the world, glided like an eel through the palace gates, and on till he came with his suave obeisance before Yelishti.

Such was Tharle, that he could cast his shadow where he would. Perhaps so infinitesimal that a beetle would shudder and stamp it out; perhaps so huge that the moon and stars would be as ghosts behind a blackness so intense that even the Sultan's cat could see through it only as a man sees through a fog.

Yelishti spoke his desire, and Tharle sat cross-legged, quivering with silent but cunning laughter, conjuring meanwhile those seven shades of darkness that were a cloak for his brain. There was no wrestler known who could hold Tharle—neither the tall bearded giants from the mountains nor the squat barbarians from the plains—and it was said that the superstitious villagers ran shuddering into their huts at the sound of his name.

When the prince had finished speaking, the wiliest thief in the world, who bore no weapon but his shadow and his poniard and his laughter, slipped out into the night again; past the jewelled trees and the crystal walls of the last courtyard; past the first of the twelve mountains whose sides are ridged with uncut diamonds; past the indigo waterway, on his quest.

Only once did he pause to bare his sharp white teeth to the stars, only once to shake his oiled arm to the moon; for the reward was great: the topaz hair, the tiny feet, the amber body of the dancing girl. And of all things in the world Tharle coveted not anything but Nashta.

For many more days Yelishti sat on his carpet, and Nubians with scarlet loincloths pressed upon him delicate white and purple wines, golden loquats and roasted birds,

whose rare plumage clung to them as in life. Sinuous women from the south postured for his amusement. But all these things lay about him untasted, and the sinuous women stormed from the palace with lowering brows. Only the pink-breasted doves in the courtyard knew that Nashta wept alone and sadly with her silver image in the pool of the hanging garden.

All this while, Tharle sped on his way, and so light his footfall, that the great panthers heard no twig crack, and a monstrous jewel-eyed python mistook him for a mate, so sinuously did he go. Into the awful forest whose every tree is scorched with the story of the sixteenth deadly sin, over the black heart of the valley where poisonous vapours pollute the air so that he who breathes is doomed; through impassable torrents of boiling silt, and finally to the gates of silver filigree through which the spires of the Sultan's realm could be seen glimmering like stars in water.

And this was the hundredth day of Tharle's journey.

The hundredth day dawned, and yet did not dawn, for the sun thrust his limbs from his gold palanquin, and found no rivers glowing under his touch and no glittering clouds for his adornment. In fact nothing save an unending belt of blackness, through which bubbled the soft laughter, the mocking laughter of Tharle.

On the second hundredth day, the strutting gilt-footed peacocks in the prince's garden folded their bright plumage, and the musicians, who played miraculously on ivory lutes, put away their instruments and sat watching the sky with ominous faces.

For in the south was a shadow; and those who watched it knew it for Tharle. A Tharle who leaped and ran and shook his fist at the sky, who pitted his shadow against the vast shadow of the ice mountain, who blotted out green valleys as a man blots out a blade of grass. A dangerous Tharle who drew his darkness after him like a cloak, and those in the palace who listened heard the wailing of the hordes who floundered to eternity through the belt of ever-growing shadow; even the transparent people of the sea wondered with blank green eyes at the inky pall on the water.

Soon, in the whole world, the palace of Prince Yelishti glistened as a solitary light. The blue minarets still shone in the sun, and the seductively perfumed flowers leaned on its warmth. But Tharle sped on, and soon darkness mantled the whole world. Shadows spread subtle black fingers over the jewelled trees and the jade lawns, and there was no place where the light remained but on Yelishti.

He looked up proudly, and as the last light of the world shot the emerald on his forehead into a thousand flames, he knew that his fate was upon him. Not as he would have wished, with ten princes to bear his body, and ten thousand slaves to wail his loss, but miserably, at the hands of a thief—of the wildest thief in the world.

For Tharle knew.

Through the eyes he had dared to steal with no weapon but his poniard and his darkness and his laughter, through the smouldering eyes of the great cat that pierce secrets however sinister and thoughts however cunningly concealed, there had been revealed that which brought him back with horror and death and vengeance in his wake. For they revealed the topaz hair, the tiny feet, the lovely body of the most beautiful woman in ten kingdoms, Nashta, whom he coveted more than anything in the world, glimmering faintly as some half-opened water-lily, and floating cold and white and still, at the bottom of the indigo waterway.

O could I take love lightly
And only pleasure find—
The pattern of the moment—
How easy were my mind!

But acts and times and lover
My searching vision sees,
In fearful exaltation,
As worlds, eternities.

This cosmic eye's no asset,
It strangely magnifies;
I wish that I could change it,
And join the worldly-wise.

R. G. HOWARTH.

AT BUNGENDORE.

Now the white-buskined lamb
 Deserts his ewe and bawls;
 The rain spills from the dam;
 A far-off birdcry falls.

So harsh the bough, yet still
 The peach buds burst and shine:
 The blossoms have their will—
 Would God that I had mine!

That I might stoop no more
 When spring shall clot the bough
 To peel the ancient sore
 And wince, as I do now.

JAMES MCAULEY.

Compels my blood this new familiar face,
 This stranger haunts my heart with seen-before,
 Prompting the latent index to restore
 Each carefully obliterated trace
 Of your peculiar trick of ugliness,
 Which once had power (and has a little still)
 To swerve my dictates and decrees of will
 Unwillingly to serve your no and yes.
 I own my own soul now no more than then,
 And in its government I have no voice,
 Even of governors to make a choice,
 Or to select my loves like other men.
 Forefated are my rulers, and my rule
 Superfluous as learning to a fool.

H. F. STEWART.

AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE, 1938.

By H. M. GREEN.

For those who are interested in the work of Australian writers as such, it is proposed to print annually, in this section, a comment on and selective summary of the previous year's publications: here is the first.

1938 was an exceptional year, for both verse and prose. The social and political conditions which have produced a post-war boom in local book production still hold, and in particular the adverse exchange, which amounts to a twenty-five per cent tariff in favour of the Australian publisher. As a result, it is far easier to get a book printed in this country now than before the war. But Australians must take naturally to writing; besides the large local production, we seem to publish more books overseas than the writers of any other British dominion. It is true that some of these books do not concern us here, since their authors have settled in England and their subjects are not Australian; but it is worth noting that the centripetal tendency among the writers of the British Empire seems at least not to be increasing.

The prevailing characteristics of Australian literary work and the forms that have become fashionable since the war remain unchanged. Our best writers continue for the most part to cultivate a cosmopolitan spirit rather than the nationalism of the nineties and nineteen-hundreds, and psychology rather than action and incident; with the result that their work gains in art and breadth, but is not so deeply rooted. The ballad remains in its grave; the short story, though alive, is far from vigorous; of the plays that are fairly frequently acted, hardly any find their way into print. Here, as overseas, a few poets, toughened by an astringency of thought, seem to have won some sort of position in a world adverse to poetry; but only one art-form really flourishes, and that largely at the expense of the rest: almost all our writers turn naturally to the novel.

More verse and better was published in 1938 than for many years, including the best book by a young writer that has appeared out here for a generation. R. D. FitzGerald stands somewhere between Brennan and the intellectuals of to-day, but his *Moonlight Acre* (which includes the 150th Anniversary Celebrations Committee's prize poem), contains no echoes of either; there is a chance that he may one day become all that one or two enthusiasts have called him already. There were four other notable books by poets who were not making their first public appearance: Shaw Neilson's *Beauty Imposes*, Hugh McCrae's *Mimshi Maiden*, T. I. Moore's *Adagio in Blue*, and Harley Matthews' *Vintage*. Neilson's lyrics have the sensitive tenderness, the flower-scented delicacy of his earlier work, but do not quite reach its highest standards. McCrae's delightful little fantasy was written long ago, but omitted from his published collections, probably in order to avoid incongruity. Moore was already fairly well known as a poet, though this was his first book of verse. He is a lover who intellectualizes his raptures; nevertheless they remain raptures, and he has a sensitive lyric gift and a determination to make the most of it that may carry him a long way. *Vintage* is a series of war poems that recall the Matthews of the short stories in *Saints and Soldiers*. They have more pith than his earlier verse, but the disjointed structure that he uses, in common with some of the English war poets, to symbolize the nature of his experience, is not altogether successful.

Several other poets should be mentioned, mostly new. There is individuality and substance in the austere and rather formal verses of Leonard Mann, author of *Flesh in Armour*, with their slightly cynical tang and rare lyrical passages. The verse of Mary Finnin's *Beggars' Opera*, though unlike Mann's, is of a somewhat similar type: grave, concise, restrained, hardly ever lyrical. Ronald McCuaig, not less thoughtful than the other two, is much younger in manner, freer, less restrained. He is of the tribe of Eliot, though by no means a mere follower. Sometimes he wastes words, sometimes he merely scribbles in cynically pensive mood, but one or two of his poems, for example "Music in the Air", are

haunting; *Vaudeville* is one of the most promising books of verse that have appeared out here for many years. Rex Ingamells' *Sun-Freedom* is the latest of several little books. His sympathy with the aborigines extends to their languages, so that some of his verse is hardly intelligible without the glossary that he supplies; but he has a vision of stars that "can make the silence sing". Finally, there is J. L. Glascock, in the best of whose *Later Poems and Others* (but only in the best), a grave and simple dignity and a sincere emotion very largely atone for a conventional attitude and method and worn and commonplace expressions.

The year produced three novels that are outstanding: Christina Stead's *House of All Nations*, Xavier Herbert's *Capricornia*, and Seaforth Mackenzie's *Chosen People*. The first does not really concern us, for its author left Australia ten years ago and settled abroad, and the book is cosmopolitan in tone and subject. But it is difficult to pass it over entirely. Huge, packed, amorphous, it is neither a popular nor an artistic success, but it shows its author to possess a combination of qualities such as I have found in no other writer to-day. *Capricornia*, which was deservedly awarded the 150th Anniversary Celebrations Committee's prize for the best Australian novel of the year, is again highly individual, enormously long, and packed with character and incident; it is set, however, in the midst, not of old-world sophistication, but of the crude, raw, lonely Territory, in an atmosphere of pain, cruelty and wretched "black velvet". The principal defect of a powerful and absorbing book is that its world has been distorted in order to accentuate an indictment of race prejudice and the types that are possessed by it in the far north, so that it presents not a human world but a kind of hell. Miles Franklin was wise when she compared *Capricornia*, by implication, with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. *Chosen People*, which also was considered by a literary society to be the best book of the year, finds sophistication enough in this country. Its author is the Kenneth (Seaforth) Mackenzie whose first novel, *The Young Desire It*, and whose long poem, *Our Earth*, appeared in 1937. *Chosen People*, whose length is reasonable, is one of those accomplished essays in eroticism which one

would not have expected from Australia, but of which there have been several in the last decade. It is written beautifully, sometimes just a little overwritten, and the characters and their emotions are subtly and sensitively presented, yet there is always a misty curtain between us and their hot-house world.

Of the remaining notable novels of the year, Eric Lowe's *Salute to Freedom* is yet another huge packed book. There is a freshness and spaciousness about it which *Capricornia* and *The House of All Nations* do not possess, but it lacks their unity of impression, is under-engined for its length, and has certain technical defects; nevertheless it is a first novel of considerable power. Eleanor Dark's books tend to conform to a fixed pattern and technique; they even tend to employ similar types of character. This narrowing of range is a handicap to the work of one of the most promising of Australian novelists. *Waterway* has also a somewhat forced and sentimental ending, in that after the vividly described harbour accident the survivors are mostly those that one would like to see survive. In *Portrait of Lucy*, Winifred Birkett, another promising writer, set herself an extremely difficult task: to build her book about three figures, one commonplace, one a shadow in the background, and one a young girl whose quiet retiring personality was intended to develop almost insensibly until it took possession of the reader. The book fails to convince, though its pale pastel has an attraction of its own.

The only new play, Mrs. Drake-Brockman's *Men Without Wives*, another 150th Anniversary Celebrations prize winner, is a contribution to Australian drama in spite of some fairly evident faults.

For the year's work in applied literature there is unfortunately no space here, except in so far as it concerns scholarship. In this sphere there appeared Professor Murdoch's *The Victorian Era*, which, though it does not break much new ground, has the charm and clarity that attaches to all Professor Murdoch's work; Barnard Eldershaw's *Essays in Australian Fiction*, which is the best book about, as well as

by, Australian writers that has appeared for a long time, and the only one to tackle them from a psychological point of view; and A. J. Coombes' *Some Australian Poets*, which also was awarded a 150th Anniversary Celebrations Prize.

SONG.

Let those who will drink Hippocrene
Full of the glowing south,
Falernian or fairy dew—
For I have drunk your mouth!

And some may weave the zephyrs' paths
And in them sunbeams snare;
But I have caught the sun itself
All clouded in your hair!

Behold above, the zealots cry,
That in which all has part,
The only home and fount of grace!—
But I have known your heart!

R. G. HOWARTH.

BROUGHT TO BOOK.

A GUIDE TO BRENNAN.

Christopher Brennan, by H. M. Green. (Angus and Robertson Ltd., Sydney, 1939. 5s.)

IN his booklet *Christopher Brennan*, consisting of two popular lectures delivered at the University of Sydney for the Australian English Association, Mr. H. M. Green has done a piece of work which needed doing, and done it excellently. He has provided a simple, but comprehensive, guide to one of Australia's most important poets—made Brennan easy for beginners, one might say. Biographical and bibliographical facts are set out for standard reference, the general theme and mood of the "Poems" deftly sketched in; the moot questions of the symbolism and obscurity of "Cryptic J. Brennan" are handled straightforwardly and soundly, a sympathetic portrait is painted of the poet, and the poetry itself appraised with discrimination.

In a preface Mr. Green sets out that his main purpose is to induce Australians to read Brennan, "and to this end to explain away certain misapprehensions; to say something about the man as well as the poet, and to show how the man is reflected in his poetry; to show why and how far it is obscure; to suggest how it may be approached; and to point out some of the best and most characteristic passages". These aims are all realised. Each one, moreover, fills a definite need, and this for three special reasons. To begin with, Brennan has suffered the fate, common to our best poets, of being unread simply because his work has been inaccessible. To many, therefore, his name, as Mr. Green rightly observes, "conveys no more than a rumour of genius and two or three anthology pieces". These pieces, it may be added, give no real indication of Brennan's range and stature, for Australian poetry has been decidedly unfortunate in its anthologists. Secondly, Brennan has been frequently represented as a difficult, unintelligible poet, fit food for only scholarly or esoteric palates. Finally, the two critics who have written on Brennan, A. G. Stephens and Mr. Randolph Hughes, have both, amidst discerning comment, misinterpreted his poetry on fundamental points. Mr. Green has not only dispelled any ignorance of the poet by his comprehensive account of Brennan and his work, but he has also shown, clearly and convincingly, that the poetry can be appreciated and enjoyed by everyone, for it possesses such appreciable qualities as feeling, music, and simplicity. He has helped to lay the obscurity bogey which has hitherto scared potential readers. He disproves effectively the Stephens fallacy that "Brennan wanted heat to set his words in motion", and the rather oddly erroneous dictum of

Mr. Hughes that Brennan lacked the singing faculty, lyrical or elegiac. At his best Brennan is both passionate and musical, and Mr. Green, by making this amply clear, renders a needed service.

Inevitably, of course, this booklet challenges comparison with the Stephens monograph and the "essay in values" of Mr. Hughes. On the whole, the challenge is successful, for if it does not strike out into the many brilliancies of the two previous studies of Brennan, it presents the soundest and the best all-round account of him to date. Certainly it shows a fuller understanding of Brennan's poetry than does Stephens. As a brief and popular study it moves within self-imposed limitations, and hence misses the depth, of thought and scholarship alike, in the much larger work of Mr. Hughes. Nor, as put into lectures for the general public, can it compass the amplitude of his style. On the other hand, Mr. Green escapes the defects, whether in judgment or expression, displayed by the two earlier critics. I thoroughly agree with him, for instance, that some of the selections quoted by Mr. Hughes from Brennan are not of the happiest: I find scant virtue in the "trophies and glories" couplet or the "What night is this" passage from "Lilith" which he extols. I have my own lances to splinter with Mr. Hughes. He indulges in *boutades* on sundry matters which deserve the raps given by Mr. Green. Yet surely it is unfair to him to devote a page of condemnation to these "conspicuous defects"—only minor irrelevancies after all—and two meagre lines to a recognition of his valuable study of Brennan's mind and his affinities with French symbolism?

Again, while Mr. Green is right in disputing the claim of Mr. Hughes that "The Wanderer" was deliberately written in Ionics and other classic measures, it is inaccurate to imply that Mr. Hughes has asserted that Brennan's measures were based on quantity, not stress. He himself took pains to guard against this misapprehension. On another point of accuracy, "The Wanderer" contains three rhymed poems, not one, as stated. A few comments also invite dissent. To say that "In Brennan's day hardly any poet except O'Dowd . . . could be called intellectual" is to omit Baylebridge, who is perhaps more "intellectual" than Brennan and a poet of comparable stature. In praising Brennan as a practitioner of the "grand style", the critic adds: "I can't think of any such practitioner anywhere nowadays, and there have never been any in Australia." But surely Lascelles Abercrombie in England, and in America Anna Hempstead Branch (her epic "Nimrod" is fit mate for "Lilith") have both deliberately adopted this style, and practised it in epical poems on a grander scale than any of Brennan's? The "grand style", it might be reasonably claimed, has also been used in Australia by Baylebridge in "Love Redeemed".

It would be difficult to support the sweeping statement that "All Brennan's poetry moves to music . . . laboured sometimes, but always

rich and sonorous". Elsewhere Mr. Green himself admits that Brennan could write "a horrible cacophony". Brennan's ear, whether for rhythm or tone—but especially for tone—was uncertain and definitely inferior to that of McCrae or Neilson, natural singers both. It could allow him to perpetrate the harshest collocation of syllables. He frequently falls into sibilances, as ugly as they are clumsy. To claim that he was always musical is as misleading, to my mind, as to allege, like Mr. Hughes, that he had practically no singing faculty at all. Misunderstanding might possibly result, furthermore, from the assertion that "Brennan is a keen visualiser". He could be, on occasion, and splendidly so; but in general he is not a visual poet, and tends to use words rather than pictures, thus becoming rhetorical. He knew this himself, and confessed: "My rhetoric . . . is the inherent evil of my flesh." His power of visualisation is weak beside McCrae's or FitzGerald's. Whether he is "the finest of Australian poets" must remain, of course, a matter of individual opinion, but it should perhaps be noted that the same claim has also been made, by competent critics, on behalf of O'Dowd, McCrae, Neilson and FitzGerald. Is any of Brennan's poems—say, "O desolate eves"—finer or more powerful than FitzGerald's "Essay on Memory"?

Having touched on a few significant but debatable points—where personal judgments may well vary—I can find little to cavil at in Mr. Green's competent handling of his subject. His portrait of Brennan brings him splendidly alive as he talked, a Sydney Dr. Johnson, at the Casuals' Club, of which the critic himself was a member, or strode along the city streets, reciting poetry. He appears as warmly human, essentially sociable, despite his loneliness of spirit; impressive, yet lovable, "full of a large and easy good nature". "His personality", it is well said, "was greater than his character; his powers were greater than his control of them." The tragedy of his failure to realise himself is well interpreted. While due tribute is paid to Brennan's scholarship, Mr. Green stresses more the fundamental simplicity of his character. He points out justly that Brennan, despite his capacious mind, was not a creative thinker; that his poetry was not a philosophical expression so much as an emotional refuge.

The relationship of the poet to his poems is traced, and the localisation of certain passages joins the analysis of "The Wanderer" measures to make two interesting and original contributions to our study of Brennan. Mr. Green's liberal views on English metres may seem provocative to some readers; I find them eminently sound. His explanations of Brennan's rhythms are satisfactory, if certain lines would receive different scansion from other ears. As Mr. Green declares, Brennan seems to have worked on loose schemes of pentameters and alexandrines in "The Wanderer", and the result is "a rich and varied delight" of harmonies. He might have added here, in further refutation of Mr. Hughes, that the rhythms carry,

as well as individual variations, familiar Celtic notes in their use of metrically irregular successions of stressed and unstressed syllables. The same freedom with spondees and pyrrhics is employed by such Irish poets as Yeats, Stephens, and AE, and "The Wanderer" rhythms can find ready parallels in their work.

The quotations are well chosen, with deserved praise given to "O desolate eves". As characteristic of Brennan, however, they should have been supplemented by other passages which would give a more adequate idea of the several styles, quite different in character, which Brennan employed in various sections of the *Poems*. Considering that the critic pays high homage to the architectonics of Brennan's verse structure, together with its massive and symphonic harmony, it is certainly surprising that no sufficient quotations are given from "Lilith", where these qualities are seen in Miltonic loftiness. One regrets that Mr. Green did not go beyond his lectures to give that wider study which obviously he could have given so well.

Mr. Green's success can be put down to certain capacities which gave him an unusual aptitude for his task. Through friendship with Brennan he was able to bring to it a warm and sympathetic intimacy. His literary knowledge gave him another requisite background, so that he tracks down the poet's influences and parallels knowingly. His gift of popular exposition makes his booklet flow clearly, smoothly, and pleasantly throughout; he who runs can read, enjoy, and take profit. Where other critics who knew Brennan have been carried away by his personality, particularly valuable is that well-balanced judgment with which Mr. Green has made us familiar by his "Outline of Australian Literature". Few literary critics are so devoid of crotchets; keep so even a keel in controversial waters. Yet he is himself a poet, which is a notable advantage, for not only can he deal with Brennan's craftsmanship with the skill open to one of the craft, but he can also illuminate his subject with imaginative touches. For instance, his image of the car climbing a mountain road renders precisely, yet picturesquely, the feeling created by such passages as those beginning "Last, since a pinch of dust" and "Thus in her hour of wrath".

Finally—since a review cannot take up all the fascinating questions suggested by this brief but pregnant study of Brennan—one is glad to note that Mr. Green has got to the heart of the poet's mood and philosophy when he shows that Brennan, along with his gloom and frustration, preserved a ringing, heroic affirmation which ennobled his tragic but battling pilgrimage. Undoubtedly Mr. Green, together with the Australian English Association, which sponsored his lectures, must receive our gratitude for a critical study which should be read by everyone interested either in Australian literature or in the finest poetry.

T. INGLIS MOORE.

A SMALL VARIATION ON A GREAT THEME.

The Young Cosima, by Henry Handel Richardson. (Heinemann, London, 1939. 7s. 6d.)

THE appearance of a new work by a genius is always an event; and the appearance of a new book by the author of *Maurice Guest* and *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* is an artistic event of the first importance. At this date it is unnecessary to refer to the achievement represented by these novels, or discuss their author's place in the artistic world. Though "Mr. Richardson" (Mrs. J. G. Robertson prefers to write under this name) had to wait many years for the recognition that was his due, his critics have now rendered him justice, and have generally admitted that among the indisputably great books of the century—among the supreme masterpieces of modern fiction—his novels may claim pride of place. It is with correspondingly high expectations that we take up *The Young Cosima*; and it is with correspondingly great disappointment that we put it down. The book will not add to Mr. Richardson's fame; and among those who are unfamiliar with the true quality of his work, it may even diminish it.

The book sets out to tell the story of Liszt's young daughter Cosima. It opens with a sketch of her life in Berlin as a *jeune fille* entrusted to the care of the Baronness von Bülow; it describes the obstacles to her marriage with Hans von Bülow, and how they were overcome; it gives an account of her meeting with Wagner, the development of their friendship, and her final decision to become his wife; it deals, in short, with Cosima's life from the time when she emerged from the schoolroom as an untried immature girl in her teens, to the time when, as an experienced, thinking woman, she resolved to face the odium of the Bülow divorce. Nor do these events lack an interesting general background. We are shown Cosima in relation to the great personalities of the time. We are introduced to Liszt and the Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein, to Mathilde von Wesendonck, to Ludwig of Bavaria, to Peter Cornelius and that musical prodigy, Tausig. There is hardly a character in the book that does not represent some distinguished historical personage, and there is hardly a distinguished historical personage of the Lisztian circle that is not included in the narrative. And yet the book is not convincing; what is worse, the characters are not alive.

Let us be fair and admit that to write a book which shall be satisfactory both as a novel and as an essay in historical biography is very difficult. If the writer occupies himself with marshalling the known facts and recording information gleaned from original sources, he is liable to neglect the creative vitality, and the imaginative power, of fiction; if, on the other hand, he abandons his data in order to indulge his imagination he lays himself open to the charge of falsi-

fyng or distorting the past. To combine creative interpretation with accuracy is perhaps the hardest task of the biographer, and some leniency may well be shown the writer who fails to maintain an equally high standard in both these respects. Our complaint against Mr. Richardson is, however, of another order. It is that he has wavered between these two forms without fulfilling the requirements of either; that he has failed to produce either a good novel or good biography; and—most serious defect—that he has failed to give us those qualities of force and intensity and depth which alone could have justified his experiment. To have selected so splendid, so magnificent, a theme as the tragedy of Bülow, Liszt and Wagner, and to have made nothing of it but an average week-end novel—that is, indeed, unforgivable. We have only to think of Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria* and of his essays on the "Eminent Victorians" to be aware of how the theme might have been handled from the point of view of realistic biography. Or, alternatively, we have only to think of Romain-Rolland's essays on "Musicians of Today" (to say nothing of *Jean-Christophe*) to remember the real meaning of musical understanding, and of interpretation based on humanity and insight. Finally, if we consider characterisation alone, we can hardly avoid comparing the portrait of Cosima with the portraits of other great women painted by modern writers—first, and most unforgettable, Daudet's Frédérique in *Les Rois en Exile*; then (for complexity and power) his Sidonie; Flaubert's Madame Bovary, and Tolstoi's Anna Karenina; and last, but not least, Mr. Richardson's own Louise in "Maurice Guest". To all these characters Salammbo's proud saying might be applied: "Je ne suis pas une femme; je suis un monde"; but the young Cosima? We find nothing in Mr. Richardson's portrait to explain the devoted admiration of such men as Bülow, Wagner, and Nietzsche; nothing to explain the almost universal tribute paid to Cosima as a great personality and a distinguished European; nothing, finally, to explain her later brilliancy as supervisor and administrator of Bayreuth. And it is the same with the other figures in the book. Various aspects of their characters are analysed (more or less superficially), but there is hardly an attempt at presenting an integrated and complex personality. Of the nobility and generosity and charm which distinguished Liszt, there is barely a trace. Mr. Richardson appears to have taken the epithet "fainéant" as summing up his leading traits, and has presented him to us chiefly through the medium of hostile, if not contemptuous, opinion.

Bülow does not fare much better. Even granted that all art is a selection, and the writer entitled to select such characteristics as he may think fit, it is difficult to defend a selection based mainly on weaknesses. Why not, just once or twice, have allowed us to recognise the true quality of Bülow's spirit, or Wagner's indomitable courage, or Mathilde von Wesendonck's integrity? Is it necessary to make these people appear mediocre in order that they may appear

human? Mr. Richardson's other work shows that it is not. Indeed, his Maurice Guest, his Louise, his Mahony, are continually passing judgment on their author's latest creations. "These figures have no connection with us", they seem to say; and actually the difference in power and observation extends even to matters of detail. What reader of *Maurice Guest* will ever forget the opening description of Leipzig, and the concert at which they played Beethoven's Fifth? What reader of *The Young Cosima* will spontaneously remember the première of *Tristan and Isolde*, or the atmosphere of Munich in the days of Ludwig? From every point of view, the book is unworthy of Mr. Richardson; and it is to be hoped that if he is tempted to write a sequel, he will revert to his earlier technique. His genius is too outstanding to be represented by second-rate production.

MARGOT HENTZE.

MR. ELIOT GOES GREEK.

The Family Reunion. By T. S. Eliot. (Faber & Faber, London, 1939. 7s. 6d.)

MR. T. S. ELIOT's position in contemporary literature is such that any new work by him is assured of notice; its reception may be favourable or hostile, but not indifferent. The production of *The Family Reunion* aroused much controversy, for not only is its form experimental, but also its theme is unusual on the modern stage. It is a study 'of sin and expiation', as one of the characters explains, and the subject is treated on the lines of Greek drama. The tendency of modern drama has been to neglect this theme of the children's expiation of the parent's sins, replacing it by the worker's expiation of the sins of the capitalist. In Eliot's play it is revived with some skill, but it fails completely to rouse either the pity or the terror that Greek drama inspired. Perhaps the chief reason for this failure is that the play's appeal is intellectual, not emotional; it is well constructed, the puppets are all in the right place, but the pulling of the strings is too apparent. One might call it an 'interesting' play, but not a moving play, not a great play. The principal characters are shadowy, unreal, they do not stir the reader's feelings nor, I imagine, those of a spectator.

There is a curse on the Monchensey family, a curse brought on it by the father of Harry, Lord Monchensey, the present holder of the title; and on Harry falls the burden of expiating the sin of his father. Wishwood, the country house which is the scene of the play, almost assumes the rôle of a character, and is closely linked with the character of Amy, the Dowager Lady Monchensey. For eight years

she had kept it unchanged, static, waiting and watching, while Harry had been away; now, on her birthday, he is returning, and his brothers, uncles and aunts are assembling for the family reunion.

The influence of Greek drama is apparent in certain details of form: there is a Chorus, for example, and several times the Eumenides appear, shadowy figures in a window embrasure. But Greek influence goes far deeper than the external details. It is explicitly avowed once:

whether in Argos or England
There are certain inflexible laws
Unalterable, in the nature of music.
There is nothing at all to be done about it,
There is nothing to do about anything.

Here is submission to an omnipotent destiny in its most complete form; there is no escape from the burden of expiation.

Apart from the expiation theme, Harry is haunted by the problems of time, change, and reality, which were the major problems of Greek philosophy. 'Time and time and time, and change, no change!' he cries, and again,

The things I thought were real are shadows, and the real
Are what I thought were private shadows.

When Agatha says

We do not pass twice through the same door
Or return to the door through which we did not pass

she is stating a version of Heraclitus's 'We do not step twice into the same river'.

The twisting, tortuous thoughts of Harry and Agatha lead, however, to no conclusion save that Harry must leave Wishwood and seek refuge elsewhere from the pursuing Furies: so will the curse be expiated,

So the knot be unknotted
The crossed be uncrossed
The crooked be made straight
And the curse be ended.

Two parts, each divided into three scenes, constitute the play, which, like Eliot's earlier plays, is in verse. A verse form seems appropriate to a Greek subject, but a difficulty arises from the division of the characters into two groups: the solid, unimaginative, conventional members of the English upper class, represented by Harry's uncles and aunts, and the intensely wrought, visionary, and unreal figures of Harry and Agatha; between them Amy and Mary, a cousin of Harry's, act as connecting links, glimpsing a world they do not understand. For Harry and Agatha to speak in verse is fitting, and sometimes their voices might come from the Waste Land:

In and out, in an endless drift
Of shrieking forms in a circular desert,
Weaving with contagion of putrescent embraces
On dissolving bone. In and out, the movement
Until the chain broke, and I was left
Under the single eye above the desert.

From Gerald, however, we get:

I don't in the least know what you're talking about.
You seem to be wanting to give us all the hump.

But perhaps it is unjust to raise any objection to verse of that type. The difference between the verse Harry speaks and that used by Gerald on the stage is no greater than would be the difference in their every-day speech; and if one not only tolerates, but also expects, bad prose in stage dialogue, one should not cavil at bad verse. Here and there a memorable line flashes out, tense, vivid, packed with significance. Death is described as 'A momentary shudder in a vacant room'. Amy speaks of Harry's wife,

A restless shivering painted shadow
In life, she is less than a shadow in death,

and we have a complete picture of her.

Interesting turns of thought, and stray flashes of brilliant verse, however, do not suffice to make a great play; much of the dialogue in *The Family Reunion* is flat and unimpressive; the action is confused and never completely resolved; and though the minor characters are alive and clearly defined, the principals remain misty.

MARGARET WALKOM.

A POET'S EXPLORATION.

Casting Off and Other Poems, by Enoch Powell. (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1939. 3s. 6d.)

POEMS by a professor of Greek? That is not how one would describe either of Professor Powell's two volumes of verse. No doubt, of course, his training has formed his work, with its sharp, decided style, its confident blending of tradition and experiment; and some of the poems have that thrifty grace which we have been taught to think of as classical.

Though I should be long away,
Spring upon the hills will stay;
Petal, leaf and frond of fern
Will not fade till I return.

Transient, then, beyond belief,
Frailer far than any leaf,
Briefer than the spring must be
That which will not wait for me.

This—with the beautiful pause on "spring" in the last line but one—may serve as a specimen.

But it is a specimen quite unrepresentative of the volume as a whole. Here, far more than in *First Poems*, is experimental vigour, vivid and dramatic vision.

I flee in vain;
The curse outstrips the wind
And on the shores of Ind
Takes form again.
A boat heaves-to;
Out stretch ten swarthy hands,
And there the spectre stands
Among the crew,
With open throat
And khaki shirt, knees bare,
Brown sun-hat on black hair,
Steering the boat.
The engines stop.
He turns with parted lips,
While graceful on his hips
The dark hands drop;
And though the eyes
Are strange, and strange the face,
And strange and far the place,
I recognise.

In this poem a few short, clipped stanzas submit to a single uninterrupted impulse and stamp one image—an image all the more striking because the stretching hands are bodiless, and only the figure in the stern is seen at length.

These poems are far from “academic” in the current derogatory sense of that honourable word. True, they show knowledge and craftsmanship and can handle the traditional poetic idiom without nervousness; but one is more struck by a kind of naturalness—something like actual speech. Sometimes they speak familiarly: in “Antipodes”, for example, whose conversational rhythms are held together by half-hidden rhymes and assonances, or in “When I remember, now the summer’s done”, with its subdued Georgian informality. More often they speak with brief grace or energetic decision.

It is precisely in their energy and directness that they are open to criticism. Directness can become bluntness: it is possible to hammer too hard. Take this closing stanza of a beautiful and uneven poem:

And now above the farm at home
The single peartree on the slope
Is flecked and mottled as with foam—
In all the world no hope.

The last line—however valid it may be for the poet, and despite the fact that it is prepared for in the previous stanza—is flung in the reader’s face: this, surely, is a case in which one should by indirections find directions out. And similarly, I feel that poems written in the more assertive metres—the insistent triple rhymes of No. XII, the swinging fourteeners of No. XXIII—are generally less effective than those that are less strongly patterned. Yet this is one of the things that takes one’s interest: that the man who can write something

as trite as "Speech Day" or as heavy as the clog-dance in No. XIX, can write also the seeming-easy octosyllables of No. XXXIII, and guide the free and changing rhythms of No. XL.

Professor Powell sometimes—notably in "Trains"—reminds one of A. E. Housman, whose colleague he was at Cambridge; but one is more often reminded that, for all his traditionalist training, he is not out of touch with the exploring post-war spirit.

NOTE.—The following list of *errata* comes from the author:

p. 6, l. 2, for *cocoa-palm* read *coco-palm*

p. 20, l. 10, for *flows* read *comes*

p. 28, l. 16, for *fall* read *drop*

p. 34, l. 11, for *Works* read *Work*

I. R. MAXWELL.

"ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH."

The Life of King Henry V, ed. by Percival R. Cole. (The Australian Students' Shakespeare. O.U.P. Melbourne, 1939. 3s. 6d.)

WHEN so many editions of Shakespeare's plays are available, a reviewer will feel bound to ask first of all what there is both new and good in any fresh edition to justify publication. And if he finds that the novelty comes even in part from a failure to give due weight to previous criticism and earlier editions, then he will not unjustly lose confidence in the editor and retain in his memory only the imperfections of the edition.

That is just my position with regard to Dr. Cole's *Henry V*: I find in it a praiseworthy attempt to get back to the Folio, but so frequent a failure to weigh evidence, so much unqualified dogmatism and such frequent error that I believe that the edition, evidently intended for schools, would mislead pupils and throw an almost unbearable strain on the teacher who had to correct as he read. For example, in the Introduction, one is asked to believe that in *Henry IV* Shakespeare mingled comedy with *conscientious* history, that Elizabethan scenery consisted of "crude paintings on the arras or curtained background", that the Elizabethan ideal was "the man of action", and that "to be staid" meant simply that "authority for publication was to be stayed or held up". There is a total disregard of recent investigation, such as that of Dr. Leslie Hotson, a treatment of the problem of the First Quarto that is inadequate even for a school text, and, so far as I can see, no recognition at all, either in bibliography or notes, even of the existence of Sir Edmund Chambers. There is plain error on simple questions; for example, the evidence of the Belott-Mountjoy suit, showing that Shakespeare lived with Mountjoy in 1604, is said to show that Shakespeare lived with him

"about the time of writing", i.e., in 1598-9! And the attempt to set out one of Gower's prose speeches as verse, combined with inaccurate generalisations about the distinction between prose and verse in Elizabethan texts, suggests yet another sort of deficiency.

Nor do Dr. Cole's own text and notes make up for the faults of his Introduction. In Act II, Scene i, Nym says: "The King is a good king, but it must be as it may: he passes some humours, and careers." If Dr. Cole had consulted the late Professor Brereton's edition of the play, he would have found this note on the passage: "To pass careers was to make short gallops at full speed, checking the horse and making sudden turns at the end of the course. Humours and careers is a hendiadys, meaning careers of humour. The whole phrase means 'is subject to sudden variations of mood', 'does show some abrupt changes of temper'." But evidently Dr. Cole did not consult that edition or other reliable authorities on the passage, and his gloss is: "Gets rid of some moods, and goes on. The comparison, *I think*, is to a horse"! The only comment needed is that here, as elsewhere, Dr. Cole's task has been made even more difficult by his failure to understand Elizabethan punctuation: he has simply been misled by the comma after "humours".

Rightly or wrongly, I can only say that I find such errors typical and that for me the gifts Dr. Cole brings from other fields are thus wasted.

H. J. OLIVER.

MODERN INSTANCES.

The Present Age, from 1914, by Edwin Muir. (The Cresset Press, London, 1939. 6s.)

THIS, the fifth volume of Bonamy Dobrée's "Introductions to English Literature", is a heroic attempt to provide a coherent account of our incoherent literary age, and admirably fulfils its purpose of stimulating reading along intelligent and systematic lines. Professor Dobrée's Preface is disappointingly platitudinous, but Mr. Muir has brought to his survey of the period sympathy, insight and good taste. The great defect of the book is a tendency towards generalisation. For example, there is much of value in the General Introduction, if we are careful not to take too seriously the labels of pre-war optimism and post-war pessimism, the one affixed to Shaw and Wells, the other to Pound and Eliot.

The most interesting part of this section is Mr. Muir's conception of the development of the novel, and his conclusion is forceful: "Where the sole remaining hope of the novelist is in development,

the novel itself begins to develop: it ceases to be a form and becomes a process."

The largest part of the book is rightly devoted to poetry. Mr. Muir introduces the chapter with some shrewd comments on Yeats's dictum that this is "a great age of poetry"; but he evidently interprets this as meaning the same thing as an age of great poetry, and whether he is entitled to do so is questionable. Greatness, which Mr. Muir defines as "the power to make a natural, immediate, yet overwhelming statement which produces such conviction that we forget the voice that utters it", is the quality which to him is lacking in modern poetry. The definition, otherwise admirable, is vitiated by the use of the word "natural", which is employed here and elsewhere in a fashion so utterly vague as to lack all power of conviction.

Mr. Muir has, none the less, some interesting things to say about poetry, but he is a little too much inclined to take Eliot and Pound as the measure of the verse of our age. This is not to underrate the unquestionable influence of these men; but while it is a valuable comment on Eliot's poetry to say that in it "we are farther away from the object which is being described and closer to the means which are being used to describe it", it is doubtful whether this is "the distinctive quality of the poetry of our time". The truth is more probably that the poetry of our time has no distinctive quality, and it is difficult to see why it should be necessary to find one.

After paying due respect to Yeats, Pound and Eliot, without throwing much new light on them, Mr. Muir passes on to an interesting discussion of Hopkins. Other well-known names follow, and an egoistic passage from Wyndham Lewis brings us to the poetry of the moment. Mr. Muir's chief objection to it seems to be that it shows too great a tendency to deal with things which are going on in the "world outside", chiefly in politics. This is surely somewhat at variance with his strictures on Pound and Eliot. He does not seem to realise that poetry cannot exist in a vacuum, yet admits that a poet must write about what interests him; and is, moreover, a trifle arbitrary in his opinion of what this interest shall be. It is difficult to see what is meant by the "integrity" of poetry, "general truth" and "detached artistic effort". Mr. Muir, nevertheless, extracts from the work of Spender, Auden, and MacNeice the vital qualities peculiar to each. His recognition of the importance of Spender's verse-drama *The Trial of a Judge* is an acute piece of criticism.

The chapter on fiction begins with the conventional landmarks, but Mr. Muir sees them with a fresh eye and crystallises his thoughts about them into some telling phrases. The view of James Joyce as a Puritan and a traditional moralist is arresting and amusing, but the omission of any attempt to deal with *Finnegans Wake* (*Work in Progress*) is regrettable.

There is also some intelligent discussion of the "political" element in literature, and a valuable account of the rise of the proletarian novel with James Hanley, Ralph Bates and Christopher Isherwood. The rest of the book is devoted to General Prose, Criticism and Drama, and there is an excellent bibliography.

Mr. Muir's style, except for a tendency to use superlatives and to ignore the existence of the past participle, is lucid and workmanlike, enlivened by neat touches of irony. The book, on the whole, is a stimulating and useful contribution to modern criticism, written by a man whose reverence for tradition does not cloud his broad sympathies.

DOROTHY AUCHTERLOUNIE.

THE AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH ASSOCIATION.

Annual Report, 1938.

IN presenting the Annual Report of the Association for 1938 it is gratifying to me to announce a small surplus for the first time for eight years, due largely to the financial success of the public lecture on *Julius Caesar*, but also to a curtailment in publishing expenses by sending the monthly addresses as they appear in *The Union Recorder*, instead of reprinting them in leaflet form, as had been the custom previously.

There has been a gratifying access of new members, but the number could be largely augmented by the cooperation, so often invited, of present members. The recruiting work is left, unfortunately, to two or three enthusiasts.

At the last Annual Meeting mention was made of the proposal to enlarge the "Bulletin" into a magazine. The suggestions, submitted to the Parent Body, have been approved by them and it is intended that the new arrangement shall come into force this year.

For those who may not remember what these proposals were, it will, perhaps, be as well to repeat them:

A magazine, or even an enlarged Bulletin can only be published by the A.E.A. if a larger proportion of the members' subscriptions be spent on it. It has, therefore, been suggested that the Parent Association agree to the following proposals: (a) That in future the sum paid to the parent body by each annual subscriber of this branch be one shilling, plus exchange, instead of four shillings, plus half exchange, as at present. That A.E.A. members should forfeit their right to the three copies of the magazine *English* and to any other privileges which would normally be included under the four shillings subscription. But that the A.E.A., in return for the one shilling subscription, should continue to be regarded as a branch of the parent body and

receive the Annual Report. (b) That should any A.E.A. subscribers wish to continue receiving *English* and the other privileges of full membership of the parent body, a sum of four shillings (plus half exchange) will be forwarded by the A.E.A. on behalf of each such member, as before.

It must be impressed on members that if they require copies of the magazine *English*, published by the Parent Body, it will be necessary for them to add three shillings to their annual subscription of 10s. 6d. Life members, however, are not affected by the new arrangement.

The Annual General Meeting was held on Monday evening, 11th April. The Annual Report was read and office-bearers for the year were elected. At the conclusion of the formal business an address was given by Professor J. Enoch Powell on "The Poetic Thought".

The Annual Dinner was held in the Withdrawing Room at the University on 17th November. Mr. Leslie Rees presided.

The speakers were Professor Eric Ashby, who proposed the toast of "The Association", Mr. Ian R. Maxwell, who replied, Miss Helen Heney, who proposed the toast of "Australian Literature", and Mr. R. D. FitzGerald, who responded on behalf of Australian writers.

The following lectures were delivered during the year:

April.—Annual General Meeting. Address by Professor J. Enoch Powell: "The Poetic Thought."

May.—Mr. P. C. Greenland: "Modern Literary Criticism."

June 15th (afternoon).—Mr. H. J. Oliver: "Katherine Mansfield."

June 27th.—Miss D. Auchterlounie: "Thomas Lovell Beddoes."

July.—Mr. H. M. Green: Two Lectures on Christopher Brennan.

August 11th.—Mr. Ian R. Maxwell: Public Lecture, "Julius Cæsar".

August 24th (afternoon).—Miss Margaret Walkom: "Claustrance Holme."

September.—Dr. R. Farrell: "Modern Poets in Germany."

October.—Miss Elsa Pigott: "The Fairy Element in Shakespeare."

Mr. H. F. Stewart: "A Personal Reconciliation of Science and Poetry."

November.—The Annual Dinner.

From the Parent Association were received three copies of *English* and a copy of the Presidential Address, 1938, by H. Granville-Barker, on "Quality".

The thanks of the Association are due to Mr. Howarth and to Mr. Oliver for the considerable amount of work they have done in the preparation and editing of the "Bulletin"—work that at times must have impinged considerably on their leisure.

H. M. BUTTERLEY,
Hon. Secretary.

Statement No. 2.
AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH ASSOCIATION, SYDNEY.
Balance Sheet as at 31st December, 1938.

LIABILITIES.		ASSETS.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Accumulation Account—		Cash at Banks—	
Balance of Excess of Income over Expendi-		Commonwealth Banking Co.	
ture for year to date (after replenishing		of Sydney Limited	2 5 5
Life Members' Subscription Reserve		Commonwealth Savings Bank	
Account)	1 15 2	of Australia	86 19 3
Life Members' Subscription Re-			89 4 8
serve Account—			
As at 31st December, 1937 ..	50 14 9		
Add Proportion of Excess of			
Income over Expenditure			
for year to date, to re-			
plenish in respect of 1937			
Deficit	12 3 3		
Ordinary Members' Subscriptions			
Advance	62 18 0		
The English Association, London—			
Proportion of 1938 Subscriptions			
	4 3 6		
	20 8 0		
	£89 4 8		£89 4 8

Sydney, 18th March, 1939.

A. E. SAXTON, B. Ec., F.C.A. (Aust.),
 FRED. T. BERMAN,
 Joint Honorary Treasurers.

SOUTHERLY

VOLUME ONE, NUMBER TWO.

APRIL, 1940.

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EDITORIAL NOTE.

SOUTHERLY arrived at a time when magazines of a different kind were exploding. Whether for this or for other reasons, small notice was taken of it in the daily papers and the periodicals to which it had been sent for review; nevertheless it was gratifyingly received by the public, and, with this encouragement, will probably continue to exist, despite the inevitable rise in the cost of production. The magazine will be issued quarterly while possible, and it is hoped that both members and others interested in literary endeavour will maintain their support.

There is all the more need now for that support. A war must not mean the end or suspension of literary activity. Rather should we strive to maintain at full strength what gives so much pleasure and such an opportunity for the use and development of the critical faculty. Then, to the English Association falls part of the duty of preserving the tradition of literature, and if barbarism is to be kept in check at all, it will surely be as much by this means as by the opposition of force. So many more "practical" matters will claim our readers' attention in the near future that these arguments cannot be too often repeated. It is above all important for us that the membership of the Association should not diminish.

The Editors wish to thank Miss Miles Franklin and the Fellowship of Australian Writers for devoting part of a meeting to a review and discussion of the first number of *Southerly*, thus bringing it to the notice of many potential contributors, who have responded with enthusiasm. If everything submitted by them cannot be used, they will not, it is hoped, turn their backs on *Southerly* for good. The magazine exists to provide opportunity for writers in all kinds to make their work known, and its pages will always be open to sincere effort.

DUPED THOUGH WE WERE . . .

Duped though we were and now must walk
beggared a beggar's miles
with swags of sober sense that balk
leaping at easy stiles,

there are still our hills beyond, whose green
smoulders, whose boughs, like smoke,
bulk darkly, pouring huge between
night and the hearths of folk;

wherefore defiance flouts, anew,
found fact: the thought we serve
slides with the land's edge out of view
under the air's down curve.

And if fooled eyes, which marvels lit
at dawn, grow canny with day—
be it so: they shall stare-down, outwit,
curt logic of dismay. . . .

When time, the sharper, reached to thiefe
last rags from limbs and back
we too used sleight-of-hand, a sleeve,
a fifth ace in the pack.

ROBERT D. FITZGERALD.

"THE TURN OF THE SCREW" INTERPRETED.

By A. J. A. WALDOCK.

RECENT discussions of this famous story provide some useful object-lessons in critical procedure. Until a few years ago everybody understood that *The Turn of the Screw* was a ghost-story—a very special kind of ghost-story, it is true—but still a ghost-story. There was not the slightest reason for supposing anything else. One had only to read the story to see that that was what it was; and if one turned to the Preface one found there exactly what one expected to find: "happy recognitions" by Henry James of his starting-point, of the various little technical problems that his idea involved, of the nice ingenuities by which this idea was finally rounded to his satisfaction. There were no difficulties, except that some readers of the worrying kind were inclined to puzzle themselves unduly concerning the precise nature of the evil done or communicated by the ghosts to the children. (If we read the Preface we see that James never meant to specify this: that was one of the pretty points of his technique.) But there were no further problems, nor did it dawn on anyone that there was more beneath the story than there seemed to be on the surface of it. So matters rested.

Then came Miss Edna Kenton, who had been studying James for years and who had become interested of late in modern psychological inquiry, with a startling discovery. The story was not at all what it seemed to be. We had all been deceived by its superficial characteristics. In reality, James had been driving at something quite different. "The young governess who tells the story is a neurotic case of sex repression, and the ghosts are not real ghosts at all but merely the hallucinations of the governess."

This announcement was received in the best critical circles not only with interest, but also with a good deal of approval and admiration. Mr. Edmund Wilson wondered how, given such a clue, one could ever have missed it. Mr. Stephen Spender, busy unearthing social implications in

James that no one had ever dreamt existed, found in this idea a striking confirmation of his own theories. Even Dr. Leavis, astute and reasonable critic of James, was impressed and apparently persuaded.

Now, despite such weight of opinion, the impulse of many a devotee of James, when confronted with a notion of this kind, must be to give a shout of laughter and continue without further ado on his way. And, indeed, about the theory in one of its forms it is impossible to do much more than that. If it be urged that James, because of certain neurotic conditions, not in the governess but in himself, *unconsciously* bent the story in certain ways, imparting to it significances of which he himself could have given no account, then argument becomes very difficult. The story has as its setting a country house; the house happens to have a tower, and in its grounds is a lake. On the lake the little girl sails a wooden boat, which happens to have a hole in it for the fitting of a mast. A tower, a lake, a piece of wood with a hole in it! For Mr. Stephen Spender such an array of evidence can lead to but one conclusion: the story is an "unconscious sexual fantasy"!

This "solution" (as Mr. Spender has the hardihood to call it) must be left to its inventor and to any others who can persuade themselves of the truth of it. But it is a piece of good fortune that the theory in its more popular form ventures on to ground where it can really be met and tested. It asserts—Mr. Edmund Wilson is here the principal exponent¹—that James actually *intended* the story to be of this curious double kind: on the surface a ghost-story, in reality it is "simply a variation on one of James's familiar themes: the frustrated Anglo-Saxon spinster". Mr. Wilson has so much confidence in this theory that he has republished it;² and it is time that someone dealt with it.

Of the preface to the story—obviously a document of cardinal importance—it seems necessary to say no more than this, that it nowhere gives an inkling of James's intentions, if these are what Mr. Wilson says they are. Miss Kenton and

¹ *Hound and Horn*, Henry James Number, 1934.

² "The Ambiguity of Henry James" in *The Triple Thinkers*, 1938.

Mr. Wilson, going through this preface with microscopic care, do, it is true, succeed in detaching a parenthetical sentence of a dozen words, by which, they think, James meant to "put himself on record". Their reading of the words in question is (it seems to me) completely mistaken: a simple, obvious sense is wrested from its context and a plain meaning loaded with quite unwarrantable implications. But let this pass. Do Miss Kenton and Mr. Wilson really ask us to believe that *this* is how Henry James was accustomed to "put himself on record", that this expatiator of expatiators would have been content to underline the central idea of any story of his in a hint consisting of fourteen words "aside"? Let anyone who has doubts on this matter study Henry James's ways in his prefaces and reach his own conclusions.

Mr. Wilson, keeping a look-out for possible supports to his hypothesis, brings up a few minor points that need only brief mention. In the collected edition, he reminds us, *The Turn of the Screw* does not appear in a volume with other ghost-stories. This is true, but seems to have no importance whatever. Some of Henry James's stories (like *The Turn of the Screw* itself) were very long—he specialised in the type; others were very short. The arrangement of them in the collected edition is logical wherever possible, but sometimes practical considerations had to override logic. *The Turn of the Screw* is in an odd volume. It has no affinity at all with the three other stories (one long, two very short) with which it is grouped; nor have they with each other.

Again, says Mr. Wilson, if this story had no "serious point" it would be unique in James. Perhaps; that James himself thought it had no serious point (in Mr. Wilson's sense) is evident from the preface; it is an "irresponsible little fiction", "a piece of ingenuity pure and simple".

But argument of a general kind is really superfluous here; the story itself decides the matter quite definitely, and in this way.

When the governess first sees Peter Quint, he (or his apparition) is on the tower; she sees him clearly, but at a distance; he is unknown to her, and though she is strangely disturbed, she makes no report of the occurrence. The second

time, she sees him face to face, takes in every detail of his person, and afterwards describes him with minuteness to Mrs. Grose, the housekeeper. And before she has proceeded half-way through her description Mrs. Grose has recognized the person being described: Peter Quint, who is dead, and of whom, up to this moment, the governess has never heard. Observe that there is no grain of doubt about the identification: it is absolute: the figure seen *was* Peter Quint and no other.

Here is a stubborn fact of the story that must somehow be surmounted; there are others of the sort, but this is the most critical; and unless it is surmounted the whole theory of hallucination collapses. It is curious that Mr. Wilson should seem to feel that if he succeeds in softening down refractory passages of this kind he will have gained his point, or even that if a few are left over, unsolved, no irreparable harm will necessarily have been suffered. "Almost everything from beginning to end"—so he maintains towards the close of his discussion—"can be read equally in either of two senses". "Almost everything"!—but it must be shown that *everything* can be so read, if the theory is to stand.

Of course, to any reader unencumbered by theory the passage just referred to bears, and can bear, only one meaning: the ghost is real.

Now hear Mr. Wilson on it; he says of the incident that "when we look back we see that even this has been left open to a double interpretation. The governess has never heard of the valet, but it has been suggested to her in a conversation with the housekeeper that there has been some other male somewhere about who 'liked everyone young and pretty', and the idea of this other person has been ambiguously confused with the master and with the master's possible interest in her, the present governess [*she had met the "master" in London and had fallen a little in love with him*]. And has she not, in her subconscious imagination, taking her cue from this, identified herself with her predecessor and conjured up an image who wears the master's clothes,¹ but who (the

¹ Peter Quint was the valet, remember, and made free with his master's clothes: Mrs. Grose tells us so.

Freudian 'censor' coming into play) looks debased, 'like an actor', she says (would he not have to stoop to love her!)? The apparition had 'straight good features' and his appearance is described in detail [*red hair, close-curling; queer little red whiskers; eyebrows somewhat darker than the hair and the whiskers, and particularly arched; wide mouth, thin lips; clean-shaven except for the little whiskers; wearing no hat*]. When we look back we find that the master's appearance has never been described at all: we have merely been told that he was 'handsome'. It is impossible for us to know how much the ghost resembles the master—certainly the governess would never tell us."

What labour, what complication, what far-fetched ingenuity to account for something that never for a moment needed accounting for, that was already quite simply and perfectly clear! The last sentence—"it is impossible for us to know how much the ghost resembles the master"—is sheer fatuity; does Mr. Wilson mean that the master too may have had little red whiskers? To fall into such writing is the punishment that overtakes the critic who allows his interpretation to become more important to him than the thing he is interpreting. And what is Mr. Wilson interpreting? It is obvious that he is not now thinking of *The Turn of the Screw* as a story at all, but as a sort of clinical "case" imperfectly documented, which by determined probings may be made to yield its secrets. If he had been dealing with such a case his conclusions might, perhaps, have had some validity—though even then why the governess, confusing the master and the "other male", should have succeeded in projecting a perfectly precise, point-by-point image of Peter Quint, remains a mystery.

Having absorbed this passage into his hypothesis, Mr. Wilson naturally has small difficulty with minor obstacles encountered in his way. The governess (most accurate of reporters) relates that she felt "a gust of frozen air", though when she stares about her she sees "the drawn curtains unstirred and the window still tight". "Are we to suppose", asks Mr. Wilson, "that she merely fancied that she felt it?"

Why not, if it will save the hypothesis? Turn the story upside down, stand it on its head, do anything to it, but save the hypothesis.

Indeed, that is exactly how, at the end, Mr. Wilson leaves the story—turned neatly upside down. “When we look back in the light of these hints, we become convinced that the whole story has been primarily intended as a characterization of the governess”. It is abundantly clear that James’s primary intention was nothing of the kind. The story was to come to us as someone’s experience, that is true; *that* was a primary intention, for just there (in “the tone of suspected and felt trouble . . . of tragic, yet of exquisite, mystification”) lay some of the best effects to be gained. And so the “supposititious narrator” had to be clear-minded, sensitive, impressionable; and circumstances virtually required that this narrator should be the governess. So far, and no farther, James imagined her; it would have been interesting to see the expression on his face could he have learnt, from his latter-day critics, what her real trouble was.

RAGS OF RAIMENT.

Lift thy mantle,
Lift thy raiment,
Break down on the dusky place;
Set afire the unsunned flowers,
The winds invade with flame.
Thou, the sun of a thousand worlds,
Give light from thy thrown mantle.

Lift thy mantle,
Lift thy vestments,
The wry leaves ravish with thy sight;
The sombre woods to wonder wake
Out of thy darkling shell.
Thou, the sun of a thousand worlds,
Give light from thy thrown mantle.

DOROTHY BUTLER.

WILL O' THE WISP.

By R. G. HOWARTH.

IF you held your hands in a certain way, Rann discovered, and stood still for an hour, between them would gradually appear the faintest wisp of a mist, which remained in the perpendicular without rising, until cramp caused the position of the hands to be changed. How he came to make this discovery he does not rightly know; perhaps it was from resting his hands against the lower shelf of the mantelpiece while he stood thinking, thinking being to him a condition in which he lost sense of other possible activities. There it was: one night the mist appeared, and in his wonderment he stayed watching it until he perceived that nothing more would happen and that he might as well go to bed. But the next night he deliberately adopted the same pose, and, sure enough, after the lapse of an hour the phenomenon repeated itself. Was it a scientific discovery of any consequence? Had he found (odd thought!) a secret means of communication between his two hands, so that the right always knew what the left was doing, and vice versa? He could not tell. The thing was so strange that it almost stifled conjecture, and he could only wait and renew the experiment in the hope that some enlightenment would come to him.

It was after he had produced the manifestation every night for a week—and already he fancied he noticed a slight thickening of the stationary mist—that he began to think of psychical influence. Was this substance between his hands perhaps a materialisation from his own soul, or even the compelled reappearance of some soul that had left the body? He was not a believer in spiritualism, but the thought seemed worth entertaining. Was he perhaps selected to show the truth about ghosts—that they were physical or psychical, as the case might be, and the question would now be decided? Would it perhaps be known thereafter that all so-called spirits were of human, physical origin, springing directly from the thought, desire, and substance of some person still alive,

without independent existence? Again he could only wonder, and, while pursuing the vision, wait for something more tangible to present itself.

One night, tired by a long vigil, he must have dozed standing, and he recovered with a start to find a golden wreath floating impalpably above the still vapour, which itself seemed at last substantial, growing, and taking shape. The wreath might be light, might be leaves, might be metal, might be—hair. Hair! Yes? His own stirred. Soon there was no doubt about it. In his arms he held a woman of classical beauty, swathed in white, with a gracious and smiling expression, and a head of coiled golden hair. For the moment all thought, all feeling, left him, and he stared mutely at the apparition, stock-still, blind to everything else.

She did not speak, but she moved her lips, and she smiled, over and over again, each smile breaking and receding like the softest of beached waves. Her arms, he saw now, were bare, and were the colour of the purest flesh. Slightly bent towards him, her face offered love, tenderness—all that a man dreams in woman. She made no movement other than with her lips and her faintly flickering eyelids.

Then suddenly he was alone. There was no woman, not even a wisp of mist. With a sigh he shook himself, as out of some prolonged reverie, and dropped prone on his bed. There was nothing to do but wait until the next night.

The spirit had not frightened him. It was too obviously benign for that. Then, too, for nearly a month he had been accustomed to the presence of the mist, and had waited for its metamorphosis into something definite. And now he was more than a little in love with the phantom, which surely had appeared to him for some purpose. He was even inclined to believe that of her kindness she had taken pity on his solitude and lovelessness, and had detached herself from realms of glory to make him happy.

But the next night she did not come, or the night following. Night after night, thereafter, he stood in the identical position of each night for a month before. Night after night, as his longing grew, nothing appeared but some motes and shadows which he recognised clearly for tricks

of vision arising out of long concentration. He invoked, he besought, he implored the apparition; he tried other attitudes; he repeated every device in darkness now instead of light; but all without success. The gleam that had visited him was gone, and it seemed that before him lay only a desert of desire.

Not once did it occur to Rann then that his actions had more than a tinge of absurdity in them. He had been vouchsafed a vision of heaven, and nothing would satisfy him but to recapture it. So over and over again he tried, and every time he failed. In despair at the failure, he would throw himself on his bed and stiffen into a silent agony—an agony of impossible love and endless disappointment. He would clench his fists until the nails ploughed the palms, and thus self-tortured would wear away a sleepless night, finally, at the dawn, collapsing into an uneasy eerie dream, peopled with all the shapes a disordered brain could call up.

Then, by and by, he fancied she came to him again, never completely, but in the second form of her appearance, born out of light, floating up from nothing, poised in mid-air. Not singly but in multitude was she manifested. The air became thick with wisps of mist and gleams of gold, and often he would lie in a swirl of white and yellow, waiting for the chaos to take form. But it never did so. The phantom now inhabited his own brain, and yet it eluded him.

Whether the spirits, after their kind, play tricks on men; appear, and disappear, where and when they please, for how long they please; to taunt and tantalise, mock and make miserable, fill with longing for supernal loveliness, and dash to the ground with despair of clasping the intangible, only they can tell, and they keep their own counsel; their jokes, if jokes they be, are private. However it pleased them, it would have been better for Rann if they had let him alone.

Heedless of earth, intent on air, he wore himself out with watching. A day came, indeed, when it seemed that he could hardly last longer, but must himself slide into a spirit. Then all at once he broke the spell; he forgot his goddess in something less, and is now an enemy to contemplation, love, spiritualism, and standing still.

TO REASON.

Oh, white hart,
Vanishing for ever from my gaze,
Shall I at last find thee ensnared somewhere?
Following on the chase I needs must rest.
Should these deep shades, where Summer's flowers are fair,
Speak to me vainly through the perfumed air?
And when the trees of Autumn, with their red,
Like the blood of a dying Spring,
Send one last sigh for me, shall I seem dead,
And turn deaf ears to them, and a mute tongue,
While the silver bell beneath thy throat has rung
Its mocking music on through mile and mile,
And left me listening the while?
What of the patience of a friend?
Shall I not stay to warm myself? Or must it end
Within a knowledge of some flickering glow?
Should I enslave myself to this slow
Following on a fleeting prey?
Ah, let me stay
Where these round hills afford a peace
That ever must be lost if I should cease
To know of them.
Here where I climbed upon this silent glade
To view the sleeping landscape in its shade,
No white hart vision stirred my breath
For it was stilled.
I waited while the dying day
Spilled his evening quiet on the world.
From far beyond the mountain tops it hurled
Itself, as a wide-winged bird comes swiftly to the earth,
I knew its strength, as if the birth
Of stranger worlds than I had ever known
Startled the ripples of my dreaming, like a stone
Cast in the deep recesses of a pool.

ELSA G. PIGOTT.

WHAT IS AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE?

By H. M. GREEN.

WHAT is Australian literature? Once upon a time it meant Gordon and Kendall and Marcus Clarke. A generation or so later it was Paterson and Lawson and a poet or two on the Red Page of the *Bulletin*. Nowadays it means, for the average Australian reader, Idriess, or one or two of a widening group of psychological novelists, mostly women.

But it means, of course, much more than all these, more, even, than all that goes to make it up. It means, from a broad point of view, new growth from an old stem, the gradual unfolding, perhaps, of a new attitude towards life. To arrive at its essence we shall have to glance back over its gradual development. Australian literature has two quite different sources; two quite different streams of influence meet to form it. English literature in the larger sense, which includes all literature written in the English language, is like a banyan tree, whose great branches stretch out overseas and send down shoots into far-off soils. Hence arise new literary trees, which derive partly from the fresh soil and partly from the parent stem. One such new tree is growing up in this country. It began on the one hand with writings by cultivated people who were exiled, voluntarily or involuntarily, and who never forgot that they were exiles. Their writings drew comparatively little upon the native soil; they re-echoed English conventions and were constructed for the most part out of oversea memories. Herein lay the first of the two streams of influence; the sap that flowed from the parent tree. Of itself alone it must have grown, at that great distance, weak and thin. Yet it supplied, and has continued to supply, elements of form and tradition without which the local growth would have been merely barbaric.

The second source of Australian literature is in the native soil, and from it has flowed a stream of influence which, although comparatively crude and formless, contains the matter of life. The annals of Phillip and Hunter and Collins and the rest and the memoirs of settlers, ancestors of our

historical and descriptive work; old bush songs like *Bould Jack Donahoo* and *The Wild Australian Boy*, sung round out-back camp-fires and perhaps before that in convict road-gangs, which helped to give its tone to the Australian ballad; yarn and anecdote of bush track and township and shearing-shed, which provided material, and also a suggestion of the form, for the Australian sketch and short story: in so far as Australian literature is more than an overseas echo, it is in debt to draughts such as these upon Australian life; but on the other hand, for anything it may possess of æsthetic quality and intellectual content, and for periodic stimulus, it is indebted largely to sources in the mother country and elsewhere in the worlds overseas.

It was in the generation immediately before the War of 1914-18 that the sapling of Australian literature began to put forth characteristic foliage. There had previously been such almost isolated shoots as the poets and prose-writers who have been mentioned; and, branching in another direction, there had been some description and history and an immense newspaper production, brought to fruition by David Syme, whose *Age* ruled the Victoria of its day in the sense in which the *Times* ruled Britain. But now, in the nineties and the nineteen hundreds, everybody wrote, and everybody tried to be as Australian as possible; and under the guidance of the *Bulletin* there were created, besides a ballad that had a tang of its own and a short story that was remarkably competent, a few rather shapeless novels of considerable force and individuality, and a little genuine poetry. These elements contributed to form a literature which, though small, shallow, crude, provincial, was yet a real entity, filled with youth and life. No other British Dominion has yet produced anything to compare with it. What is Australian literature? It is this among other things.

To-day self-conscious and deliberate nationalism has gone out of fashion: the old world has drawn nearer; the influence of the soil is less evident. The form, the method, the idea, matter more to the best of our young writers than the place and the essence of the place. They are all out to assimilate the latest inventions, the latest fashions, the ultra-modern

point of view. Australian psychological novelists, individually merely promising, are not unimportant when considered as a group. And there remain a few writers who have learned from overseas without forgetting their own country.

Finally, since in estimating a range of hills one must consider its highest peaks as well as its general contour, let us ask what is Australian literature in the sense that means, what is the best it has achieved. The achievement is notable, though rather narrow. The peaks are few, but surprisingly high, all things considered. The prose work of Henry Lawson, at its worst cheap journalism, is here and there comparable with all but the best of the world's short stories. "Henry Handel Richardson" is given by English critics high place among the world's living novelists. The poems of Christopher Brennan are among the finest of his generation, a fact to which Australians are beginning to assent without reading them, and which will be recognized in Europe as soon as they are read there. And in Walter Murdoch (who, however, is English by birth) Australia possesses one of the leading essayists of the day.

The future is full of possibilities, provided that some of our young writers can be brought to realize that literature is a growth of the soil, however far it may rise above it, and others that it cannot be cultivated without learning and labour.

SOUTHERLY

THE CHOICE OF HOURS.

Some praise the whitening hour of rose and grey
 Before the sun has drained the Dewdrop Star,
 While shrilling through the tingling air afar
 The S-shaped chanticleers salute the day;

And some extol the blue and golden hour
 Of cloudless skies, or clouds that light the skies,
 When glittering leaf with glittering water vies,
 And heavier grows the balsam of the flower;

For me the calm surpasses dawn and noon,
 When daylight's busyness and mine have ceased,
 And dusk and dreams are swarming up the East,
 And Hesper still is brighter than the moon.

F. J. H. LETTERS.

EXERCISE IN VERSE COMPOSITION:

"Write a poem (the longer the better), depending for rhymes on *cove*, *walk* and *squint*."

THE SAILOR AND THE AUK.

Now this is a yarn of a sailor cove
 Who was much too lazy to walk:
 He hired a car, and away he drove,
 And he came back home with an auk.
 'Tis a wonderful yarn, and it ain't in print:
 In fact, not even the slightest hint
 Of the sailor cove with the cross-eyed squint
 Who came back home with an auk.
 Only the truth is in 't,
 The truth that I never stint,
 Of the sailor cove with a head of flint
 And a horrible twisty cross-eyed squint
 Who came back home with an auk.

When he was ashore, the sailor cove
Lived far from the blue sea's glint
At a shop on the edge of an elm-tree grove
Where they sold such things as lint.
And there this squinny-eyed sailor clove
To a chair in front of a nice warm stove
And said he was dashed if he'd ever rove
From the shop where they dealt in lint,
The bandage and the splint,
And tincture of peppermint:
Yes, the squinny-eyed sailor man, by Jove,
Was dashed if ever again he'd rove
From the shop where they dealt in lint.

Yet he mounted a car, did the sailor cove,
And he was a one to talk:
'What ho', said he, 'for the treasure trove
And the quarry I'm going to stalk!'
As he sat at the wheel he did a caulk—
He went to sleep, did the great big gawk—
But woke with a bump and a cry of 'Lawk!'
As into the sea he dove.
He dived (but called it 'dove')
Or ever a priest him shrove,
And green was the tint of his face, like mint,
But presently up he hove
And did a sprint,
For he then by dint
Of a squint caught sight of an auk
(Which is not the same as a hawk).
The job he did not baulk,
But round the bird his limbs he wove
(Its beak was blue and its wings were mauve
And its chest was white as chalk):
He held it fast, did the sailor cove,
Though it gave a terrible squawk,
And under its flippers a rope he rove
And took it ashore to the shop you know 't,
And that was the end of the auk.

F. A. TODD.

SOUTHERLY ON BREAD AND JAM.

By WINIFRED BIRKETT.

ONE afternoon lately I went to see Dame Mary Gilmore and she fed me on bread and jam.

She had compounded the jam herself from a gift of green peaches, and with an inventiveness any cocktail mixer might have envied, she had laced it with ready-made grape conserve. The result was worthy of all praise. And it was notable that Dame Mary served it straight on to the bread and butter from the pot. True jam-lovers know this for the proper way, just as Continental connoisseurs know that the proper way to serve caviare is straight from the tin.

If there is any measuring done in the making of jam it should stop there: there should be none in its offering. The originator of that strange mixture, the so-called "Devonshire Tea" (unknown, we understand, in Devonshire), was at once a finic and a Philistine. What man could view with anything but contempt a dab of conserve on a doll's saucer? It is reminiscent of those places in the East where guests are reported to be entertained with a spoonful of neat jam and nothing else. And the fact that the Devonshire Tea also provides scones and cream does not make it less contemptible.

Nobody seems to know who first boiled fruit and sugar together, or for what noble or simple occasion, but since that time many abuses have crept into the eating of it. I have seen jam stirred into porridge, wrapped up in pancakes, and poured through the holes of dough-nuts; accredited recipe books will suggest putting it in puddings and between sponge cakes; and no doubt there are people who have come to like that sort of thing. There is a country in Europe where they put jam in soup, but at present we are at war with that country, and no wonder!

Unquestionably the only way Nature and its inspired inventor ever intended jam to be eaten was spread with a fine abandon upon slices of bread and butter; the bread being fresh and of the first quality, the butter like that used by

the March Hare for oiling watches, only the best. A certain English practice of cutting the bread thin and making it into sandwiches shows an uncommendable refinement: Australians have a more vulgar and more grateful taste.

There is a freemasonry among bread-and-jam eaters that extends through all grades of society, from unashamed finger-lickers to the surreptitious wipers-upon-handkerchiefs and casual users of finger-bowls. But in expecting to meet fellow-devotees one is sometimes disappointed.

A rather distinguished elderly Englishwoman once invited me to have morning tea with her at the large Sydney hotel where she was staying. I went, supposing that I should be entertained in a public room. But no; she escorted me to her own room upstairs. And presently she produced, by some sleight of hand, a spirit lamp and a kettle, and, while the tea was making, bread and butter. It now seemed only reasonable to hope for what should properly follow; I wondered what kind of jam she would have to offer, and had just decided upon fig when she finished her preparations with—a pot of bloater paste! I am afraid she could hardly fail to notice how constrained her visitor subsequently became: salt, perhaps by an association of ideas, always brings tears to my eyes.

The matter of beverages to accompany bread-and-jam has never been given proper consideration. Beer, of course, is entirely out of the question. Tea has long been the accepted thing: but is this by accident or design? A jam of any delicate flavour does not deserve the opposition of strong Ceylon: if it be tea then, let it be China tea, and not stood long. But here, rather, seems an opportunity for Australian wines. I was going to say a golden opportunity, but some of those vintages called upon would no doubt be red. Choice then becomes important. Combinations would need to be nicely chosen and determined for the guidance of the careless or the muddled. Someone truly devoted should bring a discriminating palate to bear upon the question, so that connoisseurs of the future will have authority to choose between sweet sherry and chablis as the fitting accompaniment

to bread-and-blackberry, or to turn them both down for muscat. Lovers of wine for its own sake may for a time deplore the resulting increase in the national liking for sweet wines as against dry, or even display some irrational jealousy; the young and ignorant may try some such experiment as associating peach jam with claret, and fall between two stools: but these things will be only a matter of education and adjustment.

Our present most laudable desire is to see bread-and-jam given the place it deserves in our national honour. When I meet Dame Mary Gilmore again I am going to give her a private commission to establish its fame for all time in Australian literature and Australian tradition, and then bread-and-jam will be sung here as bread-and-cheese has for generations been sung in England.

AN ANONYMOUS VERSION OF SOME LINES FROM CATULLUS.

The sun doth sett, the sun doth rise againe.
 The day doth close, the day doth breake againe.
 Once sett our sun, againe it riseth never.
 Once close our day of life, it's night for ever.

soles occidere et redire possunt;
 nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
 nox est perpetua una dormienda.

(Catullus, V, II, 4-6.)

This little fragment occurs among some other jottings (none as good as this) in a Bodleian Manuscript (Ashm. 1463, p. 2), which is dated 8th March, 1669. There is no indication of authorship. I do not think that the lines have been printed previously, despite their obvious merit.

S.M.

THE BETEL-CHEWERS.

Leaving the dark-skinned brothers of the coast,
The betel-chewers, drugged and drowsy-eyed . . .
Pink-stained mouths and tongues a-run with juice
From sun-burst fruits and pods where strange dreams hide . . .

Leaving, for I wearied of the sun,
The changeless scents, the slack pink flowering
Of languid blossoms in the changeless sun . . .

Leaving the lush green paths I pushed aside
The broad-veined leaves, and heard Kakama say,
She will return, my brothers, for we know
Tomorrow is no more than yesterday . . .

I trod the harsher footway through the vines
To seek the sombre brothers of the hill,
And swirling mists rose through the rotting leaves
To clothe the sun with old miasmal chill. . . .

The darker brothers of the sombre hill,
Slept through the moonless night with spears beside,
And tears of blood spilled from the burnished blades,
And screaming birds swooped past them serpent-eyed. . . .

At dawn the rains swept in their fevered eyes
And drove them lean and avid to the kill;
At dawn the leaves and rivulets were red,
And bloody-mouthed the brothers of the hill . . .

Leaving, for I wearied of the blood,
I wearied for the changeless scents and sun,
The dreaming of the drowsy drugged eyes,
The betel-chewers and the changeless sun. . . .

JO HOWARTH.

New Guinea.

NATIVE DOG.

By DAL STIVENS.

THE dingo was lying in the shade of a clump of fern trees. He was five feet six inches from nose to tail and he stood twenty inches high. He was red-brown in colour. His tail was bushy. He had prick ears. He looked very much like a red kelpie sheep dog. One of his ears had been torn in a fight with another male dingo. There was a scar across his forehead and no hair grew there and it showed like a white line.

It was cool in the brush. Only an odd patch of sunlight came through the canopy of fern leaves. The trunks of the fern trees were scaly brown columns. The fern fronds were curled at the tips: they looked like bunched-up caterpillars. Moss grew on the ground and on the trunks of the fern trees. Some of the trunks seemed to drip moss. On others fungus grew: bright slices of red-yellow orange-peel. Wattle trees grew on the edges of the clump of fern trees, shining with a red glory where the light struck the dry pods. Tall trees ran into the sky. Somewhere in the brush bell birds called: sweet, bitten, sounds.

Half an hour before the dingo had killed a rabbit and eaten it. He had seen the rabbit feeding in a clump of long grass. The dingo made a half-circle until the wind blew from the rabbit towards him. Then he began to sidle towards the rabbit. The rabbit could not smell the dingo. He was mid-brown in colour. He was feeding, keeping his belly close to the earth, his paws stretched out, his head close to the grass. His jaws tugged at the grass, making clean sharp sounds. Once he stopped feeding. He crouched. First one, and then the other long ear lifted, wagged like a quill fishing-float, then dropped down on his neck. His whiskers twitched. He waited. Then he went on with his feeding. The dingo was coming nearer. He was crawling on his belly, moving forward a few feet and waiting. He could smell the rabbit and it excited him. He wrinkled his nose. The blood was set

racing in his brain. His eyes seemed to see more clearly. The rabbit became suspicious. He crouched again. Then he sat up on his haunches. His ears lifted. He moved his head about, sucking at the air with his nostrils. He made little dabs at the air with his forepaws. Then he resumed his feeding. The dingo came closer until he was only a few feet from the rabbit. He drew in his legs. His claws felt for a grip on the earth. Then the rabbit saw the dingo. He was frozen with fear. Terror pressed on his eyelids and made his eyes protrude. Then he sprang forward. But the dingo was upon him. The rabbit squealed. The dingo's paws were hammers that struck his back; his teeth were sharp cogs that crushed his neck. Fear died in the rabbit's eyes. His body became soft and a wave of trembling ran up and down it. The dingo went on worrying him for some minutes. Then the blood mania died from his eyes. He began to tear the fur away from the rabbit's belly, muzzling the warm, blood-heavy flesh.

The dingo had gorged himself. Now he was resting. But when he heard the horseman he sprang to his feet. He thrust up his nose. His ears twitched. Presently he heard the beat of the horse's feet. The dingo ran away from the fern clump. He moved quickly, running on his toes. He was crossing the small clearing when the horseman saw him.

The horseman shouted. He stood up in the stirrups. He cracked his stock-whip. The dingo was dismayed. He had never heard a stock-whip cracked before. He could not understand the sound and it threw him into a panic. The horseman cracked his whip again. The sound went bouncing around the hill slopes. The dingo was terror-stricken. His legs seemed not to belong to him. He half-stopped. The horseman came up with him. The dingo sprang forward. The man spurred the horse. The horse seemed to fight at the ground. His legs stretched out ahead and pulled his body along swiftly. The man stood up in the stirrups. He cracked the whip again. The dingo bounded high in the air. Then he sprang forward. But his courage had been destroyed by the sound of the whip. The man reached down and unfastened

a stirrup-leather. He swung it about from his wrist. He forced his horse to the side of the dingo. Terror possessed the dingo. His eyes started. His neck muscles were strained. His feet clawed at the ground. His tongue hung out. The man leaned forward and over. His right arm swung. The heavy stirrup-iron came down on the dingo's skull. The dingo lurched. He fell on his side. His legs kicked and his claws made little arcs in the dust before they were still.

A FIRST SIGHT OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

This speckled sky can intimate
Nothing new and nothing old.
The circle moves but circlewise,
And the starry manifold
Cannot love and cannot hate.

The calm and perfect ordinance,
The stave and harmony of spheres,
Are shadows by man's spirit cast,
Are echoes in our human ears
Of the marred song our tones advance.

From all imperfection springs
The perfect and immaculate.
Mary was a village lass;
And from the dunghill of our fate
The triple cock his clarion flings.

The Cross swings high, the Cross swings low,
And on the Holy Friday we
May witness under neutral stars
The purpose of iniquity.
The victory comes late, and slow.

Pray to the self, and not the air,
Not to the stars or the deep sky.
The circle lacks completeness yet.
We shall have vision utterly
When the fifth star is centred square.

S. MUSGROVE.

BROUGHT TO BOOK.

AUSTRALIAN POETS.

Where the Wind Goes, by James Devaney. (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1939, 3s. 6d.)

Poems, by Hugh McCrae. (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1939, 6s.)

Five Bells, by Kenneth Slessor. (Frank C. Johnson, Sydney, 1939, 2s.)

Battlefields, by Mary Gilmore. (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1939, 5s.)

ONE frequently hears that an unappreciative, indeed, an unheeding, public offers no encouragement to Australian poets and publishers, and it is therefore all the more pleasing to find that not even the war prevented the publication of these four volumes of verse towards the close of last year. They range from a collection of new and previously published poems by Hugh McCrae to Kenneth Slessor's tiny volume of XX Poems, with decorations by Norman Lindsay.

Mr. Devaney's *Where the Wind Goes* offers much variety, both in quality and style. It opens with lines which illustrate the fanciful tone of much of his verse and one at least of the technical devices to which he too often resorts:

Each poet hath his muse, and mine
Not seemeth of the classic Nine
With whom high seers intimately
Walk in the Land of Gramarye,

where the inversion of 'not seemeth' is clumsy. When, a few lines further down, we find:

But she is mine, mine, she is my own

we may be discouraged by a line which offends the ear. But let the discouragement be momentary only, for a few pages later we find the music of 'Euterpe':

Where does she dwell?
Even where beauty glows.
Where shall I find her?
Never will she the place disclose,
Nor a tryst bind her;
Ah, still-evaded lover, ask as well
Where the wind goes!

The use of rhyme in new and unexpected ways, with a freedom that never becomes too pronounced, is a considerable factor in the success of many of these poems, for Mr. Devaney, like R. D. FitzGerald, does not forsake rhyme for *vers libre* but uses it at his pleasure, remaining always its master in 'the service of his true love Poesy'.

The most impressive of these poems is 'The Tide Comes in', where the supple, changing rhythms suggest the rising, turning, and ebb of

the tide. One quotation must suffice, a description of the advancing waves:

Timidly bold, a mute advance they made,
A sobered throng
Half willing, half afraid;
With liquid fingers felt lightly along
The jetty piles; under the jetty floor
Lapped ripplingly;
Even the ultimate edge dared to explore—
Touched and shrank back affrighted, and again
Dared to steal in and lip the sands, and then
Turned and fled headlong down the beach once more
Back to the parent sea.

Hugh McCrae has long been one of Australia's leading poets, competent critics having advanced his claims to the first place among them; and poets themselves esteem him highly, for here we find Dame Mary Gilmore dedicating her book to Rayner Hoff and Hugh McCrae and describing the latter's poetry as 'sculpture in words', while Mr. Slessor includes a poem 'To the Poetry of Hugh McCrae'—the relation to this title of the biting and tautological foot-note, 'Poetry: An art formerly practised by the ancients', remains somewhat obscure. Fantasy runs lightly through the pages of McCrae's volume, where Pierrot and Colombine are favourite figures and the unicorn and satyr appear repeatedly. Mostly lyrics, with occasional snatches of narrative and one rather fragmentary drama, 'Joan of Arc', these poems show a lightness and delicacy, as in 'Colombine', which can turn to sheer mischief in such verses as 'Lord Bishop o' Witches' Pool' or gain depth and power in 'The Phantom Mistress' and 'Ambuscade', with its vivid concluding stanza:

A roar of hooves, a lightning view of eyes
Redder than fire, of long straight whistling manes,
Stiff crests, and tails drawn out against the skies,
Of angry nostrils, webbed with leaping veins,
The stallions come!

Very different fare from this is provided in Kenneth Slessor's *Five Bells*. The most ambitious of these twenty poems is that which gives the collection its title, a poem in blank verse distinguished by some striking passages, such as:

blank and bone-white, like a maniac's thought,
The naphtha-flash of lightning slit the sky,
Knifing the dark with deathly photographs.

or

the soft archery of summer rains
And the sponge-paws of wetness, the slow damp
That stuck the leaves of living, snailed the mind,
And showed your bones, that had been sharp with rage,
The sodden ecstasies of rectitude.

Unfortunately this felicity of compressed and telling phrase is not maintained in all the remaining poems, in which the thought is occasionally trivial and the verse flat and uninspired. 'To a Friend'

has wit and vigour, but in 'William Street' we find such a banal and clumsy refrain as 'You find this ugly, I find it lovely', and the bitter rage which apparently gave rise to some of the poems is at times—as in 'Advice to Psychologists'—too strident to be effective.

Dame Mary Gilmore, in a note to *Battlefields*, maintains that in verse 'we are due for a return to the simple and direct', and in her own work simplicity and directness are the outstanding qualities. Her range of subjects is wide, and just as wide is her sympathy, which is constantly manifest. 'The Ringer', a fragment which opens the volume, is typical of the spirit with which the author endows Australia, for she is a vigorous nationalist and deplores the fact that 'Australia has been neglected for the sectional, the individually personal, and the emotional'.

MARGARET WALKOM.

A PRIVATE IN THE RANKS?

The Spur of the Moment, by Walter Murdoch. (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1939, 6s.)

IN the preface to this, his latest volume of essays, Professor Murdoch apologizes to the reader for a "touch of gloom". "The book was written in a gloomy time", he continues, "and if there are some writers who can step outside their time, these are the captains of literature; we privates in the ranks are the creatures of our day, and if the day happens to be a cloudy one, you must not expect our writings to be sunny, though we may be philosophers enough to remember that there is still a sun behind the clouds."

This, the average reader will be inclined to think, is unnecessary modesty, for Professor Murdoch's is practically the only voice in Australia to which nearly everyone will listen, whether he talks "over the air" or speaks through his essays. A new book from his pen is always well received, and readers will stand a touch of gloom from him where they would rebel against it in another writer. They might even reason that when Professor Murdoch becomes sad there is reason to worry.

But "gloom" is hardly the term for the tone of these essays. Several are serious with a seriousness that is caused mainly by the complicated international relationships of the last few years; but there are others, and the general conclusion the essayist himself reaches is that men "have the wit and the will to escape from their present difficulties".

Those difficulties are of many kinds, varying from the evils of the monetary system to "the disease of miscellaneousness". Professor Murdoch is no doubt aware that some of his arguments could by a hostile critic be turned back against him: for example, the very popularity of the occasional essayist might be one of the symptoms of that same disease of inability to concentrate on anything for long.

But then Professor Murdoch does not pretend to cover all fields equally well, he does not pretend to know the remedy for everything; he is frequently content to point out that there is a problem, leaving Australians to find their own solution for it. Sermons, he says, are out of date.

As a matter of fact, the essays do contain some sermonizing, and I like them least when the writer pulls himself up with "Don't imagine, please, that I am trying to preach a sermon against machinery", "No, this is not a sermon", or "Enough, and more than enough of this cheap satire". There is something unnecessarily distracting about such phrases or a reference to "You, O long-suffering reader". Perhaps I could put it more generally still and say that the author occasionally strikes the wrong key: there is something disturbingly melodramatic about such a sentence as: "All we can do is to clap our feeble hands and raise a hoarse and quavering cheer as we watch young Australia ride out to battle in the great cause—the greatest that has ever lived in the tides of time."

I think, too, that there are contradictions in the volume. Can you consistently say both that "we are wholesomely self-critical" and that "frivolity is Australia's disease"? Or, in spite of its final paragraph, is the essay entitled *The Philosophy of Escape* consistent with others in the book? If these are contradictions, they are, after all, like a certain unevenness, almost unavoidable in a volume that covers such a number of subjects and was presumably written over a fair period of time. But I think that a few of the essays—for example, *On Tin-Openers*—are below the usual standard.

Others show Professor Murdoch at his best and prove that he is not as "incapable of the light touch that marks the real satirist" as he would have us believe. *The Tyrant*, on the tyranny of words, is good—much better than the three essays which precede it—and *On Rag-Bags* is a splendidly humorous indictment of the disease of miscellaneousness. Beginning with a diatribe against crooning, the essayist goes on to suggest that the public which likes its music in medleys and its reading in the form of digests should take its Shakespeare in some such form as:

Horatio, or I do forget myself,
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And Brutus is an honourable man
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Essays on literary topics seem rarer than is usual with Professor Murdoch. Apart from *On Rag-Bags*, perhaps the best included is *A Great Victorian*, in which the essayist, writing of his favourite period, pays a tribute to T. A. Guthrie, the well-nigh forgotten author of *Vice Versa*.

There is every reason, then, for adding this volume to one's Murdoch collection.

H. J. OLIVER.

Q-RIouser AND Q-RIouser.

The Oxford Book of English Verse, 1250-1918. Chosen and edited by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. New Edition. (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1939, 8s. 6d.)

For more years than he, perhaps, can remember, "Q." has patronized English literature. One result of this benign condescension was *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, in 1900, which, it is claimed, has won a place in the affections of English-speaking people comparable to that held by Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*. It is not surprising that popular opinion should class these anthologies together; for both are noted for their neglect of important poets, important periods of English verse; both for their Neo-Romantic, and ultimately, their Victorian, bias.

The new edition of *The Oxford Book*, however, purports to give (no doubt in response to criticism) consideration to poets previously ignored, greater consideration to poets previously taken lightly. Since also it has been extended to include poets writing up to 1918, one is easily led to imagine that Q. has moved with the times. To a certain extent he has, but, one feels, grudgingly, and with a disregard of modern scholarship, even of the other *Oxford Books of Verse*,—for example, those representing, respectively, the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries. If now he admits Hopkins and Traherne, it is only to the length of a piece or two; while all that the tremendous advance since the beginning of the century in our understanding and appreciation of Donne has persuaded him to do is to remove one false attribution (which is also Palgrave's), print the whole of "The Ecstasy", and replace "A Hymn to God the Father" by "An Apparition". Langland is now granted a place in the book, and so is Lord Herbert of Cherbury. A re-reading of Vaughan has resulted in the addition of four poems by him, three of them in a mangled form. Altogether, by page 496 (Prior) only ten new poems have been inserted. Authors such as Thomas Watson, Edward and John Dyer, William Basse, Thomas Stanley, Ralph Knevet, William Latham, Thomas Beedome, Philip Ayres, Sidney Godolphin, Owen Feltham, and John Hall—all of them quite as well worth including as the Victorian minors—are still neglected.

An examination of proportions shows that the nineteenth century occupies here twice as much room as the seventeenth, while the eighteenth receives even less space than the fifteenth. No wonder a large supplementary anthology was published, not long ago, containing all that Q. left out!

Then in view of his standing claim to have selected "the best" poems out of all those written in the English language, the inclusion of just one Australian piece, Kendall's "Mooni", is merely laughable.

All this raises the question what *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, a publication of wide authority, and our compendium of English

poetry for presentation to the rest of the world, should contain. As a book of *verse*, it should not be arbitrarily confined by its editor to "lyrical or epigrammatic" pieces and extracts. If he says "verse", he must not mean, almost exclusively, brevities, and therefore Pope, perhaps the greatest versifier in the English language, should be given his due space. Then a conscientious compiler would see that every worthy author of verse—in the fourteenth as in the nineteenth century—had his niche in this temple of honour. He would, in short, be a scholar, a lover of truth, as well as a reader; one with a proper respect for what his authors wrote. He would at least pay attention to the work so well done by compilers of period anthologies in this series.

I subjoin a few criticisms, relating to the earlier pages, of Q.'s methods of treatment—enough, perhaps, to bring suspicion on the whole volume. Some of these points were made, surely, of the first edition, but have been disregarded. They must be made again, especially in respect of newly added poems; then we may wait patiently for another edition—and another editor.

Silent Truncation. ("I have often excised weak or superfluous stanzas when sure the excision would improve.") We are left ignorant of where Q.'s doom falls. In only one instance, it seems, does he acknowledge that he has deliberately cut a poem short—Vaughan's "The World", which he impertinently renames "Eternity", wherein six lines of the first stanza, followed by the second and third stanzas, are omitted, to the accompaniment of a misprint ("these" for "there"), the omission being indicated by dots. Five stanzas, two of them sublime in their sense of the imminence of God ("Dear night, this world's defeat", etc.), are quietly dropped after the opening stanza of Vaughan's "The Night"—a crime against high heaven. Similarly, but perhaps with greater justification, "The Timber" is short of nine stanzas, "The Bird" of fourteen lines. Would it not be more honest to represent such an author by one or two complete poems than by several darkly altered at will?

The whole point of a poem is often sacrificed by such treatment. Q. has now seen the point of Donne's "Ecstasy", and restored it to completeness; but Lovelace's "The Grass-hopper" still lamentably lacks seven stanzas, his "To Amarantha" three, "Gratiana Dancing and Singing" two; only the conclusion is given to Crashaw's "Upon the Book and Picture of the Seraphical St. Teresa", with no sign that it is not the complete poem; Q.'s version of "The Weeper" appears to be an abbreviated conflation of the earlier and the later forms; Raleigh's "His Pilgrimage" wants 40 lines and most of its beauty; later in the volume I noticed Beddoes's "Dream-Pedlary" sadly cut. This being so, it is difficult not to quote that writer's "villain with the knife, who smiles and smiles".

Addition and Alteration of Titles. Why Vaughan's "They are all gone into the world of light" should need a trite title, "Friends

Departed", or Shirley's "The glories of our blood and state" the addition of "Death the Leveller", I do not know; or why Marvell's "The Garden" must become "Thoughts in a Garden".

Wrong or Doubtful Attribution. It was proved years ago that "When, dearest, I but think on thee", is not Suckling's but Owen Feltham's; Q. still prefers Suckling. Earlier, he could carefully transfer "I cannot eat but little meat" from Still to Stevenson. "Crabbed Age and Youth" was claimed by Deloney, perhaps before *The Passionate Pilgrim*: why not give him a hearing? "As ye came from the Holy Land of Walsingham" has as claimants Deloney and Raleigh: is Q.'s anonymous form of the poem older than either of theirs?

Misannotation. There are inaccuracies in the explanatory notes to Middle English poems. Take the extract from Langland alone: here "portatyf" does not mean "quick-moving" but "light", as is apparent from the context; "kyndely" means "through natural understanding", "by intuition", not "properly"; the "him" of line 3 refers to God and not to Christ (how could Christ instruct Moses?). These false explanations completely distort Langland's meaning.

Textual Error. ("Care has been taken with the texts.") Besides the error in Vaughan's "The World", already mentioned, there is at least this: a perfectly unpardonable misprint which makes nonsense of Shirley's "O fly, my soul"—"Sing lo, lo!" for "Sing Iō, Iō!" Since the poem has just been added, care might have been taken to see that it was intelligently enough reproduced to be intelligible.

But Q. is a precise scholar! He has altered the name "Campion" of the first edition to "Campian". Miraculous accuracy! Unfortunately for Q., however, "Campion", the family name, is only varied by the poet to "Campian", it seems, when he wishes to give it a Latin inflection.

R. G. HOWARTH.

PHOENIX, 1939.

(A Contributed Review.)

Phoenix, the magazine published annually by the Adelaide University Union, seems to me in 1939 to have done notable things.

It is true that when one has arrived at a certain age an exact opinion of young people's work is hard to form. The first flush of enthusiasm on the countenance of a young mind has nearly always at least a touch of comeliness; few dawns are without charm. The middle-aged critic is apt either to be carried away by this charm beyond sober judgement, or through hardened arteries and protest against privilege to belittle what goes with it. *Ut iuvenis iuvenem*

aestimet. In this matter, however, I am vain enough still to depend chiefly on my own reactions for my opinions; besides, I know not where else to look for them; and my reactions tell me that though of a good deal of *Phoenix 1939* it is fair to say the young people have done very nicely and it is pleasant to see them enjoying themselves, some of it deserves treatment of a different kind: as delicate, sensitive work not without strength; in fact, as beautiful work, to be taken seriously not only by the authors themselves but by me, by us.

For chapter and verse I borrow Mr. P. Pfeiffer's *At the Window* whole; it is too much a unity for me to break it up.

The last dismantled star flung into space,
In swift gradations
Night ripens into day.
Thought patterns flailed like octopus
Dichotomize.
Hen-coop cocks crow up the dawn
"The guttural goose hath ushered in the day!"

For rich, exact, contemporary imagery and lyrical movement combined with a refusal of romantic excitement—and these perhaps are the qualities we in Australia have been most in need of for our poetry, to give it body—for these qualities concentrated in a small space I do not know that I have seen this equalled in English. It has the neatness of French; and like good French work it succeeds in expressing a complex emotion by means of a simple structure; an excellent thing in a writer.

I also take the whole of Miss H. M. Swan's *Collage*. This is not so simple, and I think not so completely successful; but it is successfully clever in a manner in which to be clever is both difficult and dangerous—a post-Hopkins manner—and it has series of significant words whose texture in rhythm and sound-harmony is, if I may be forgiven for using an old-fashioned word, quite lovely. To labour the point, the authoress has made collocations in sound and sense that simultaneously pile up a necessary image, convey a unified emotion and are beautiful in themselves; a very uncommon achievement.

You held the sunlight sunlight's new-lit fire
You street, stone-masked, dim walked, building-skied, cold
caught the gold sunlight
pound and pashed it watered down to a trash
that god-wrought sod-risen sharp and crystalline light
bright essenced white patina of the
day's disclosures. You street
turning upon a central pivot
swung
and sung
I sir am death an almond
for a parrot dillycately drest
confest
the dim solidity of earth
from stone and asphalt brought to birth.

This is a little complicated, no doubt, but then it is intelligent art treating a complicated subject. It does need a few additional stops. Verse may assuredly be so constructed as to make punctuation unnecessary; but in these particular verses one asks for more help with the rhythm than one gets. So fine a piece of work should be above what might be virtue in an anagram.

Mr. Max Harris has a harder and I should say a less purely poetical way of thought and language than either Mr. Pfeiffer or Miss Swan, but also a considerably wider range. Mr. D. B. Kerr's delicate images and rhythms are certainly poetry, and they are of a kind nearer to what people of my generation are prone to ask for as such, but they are too private. Reticence is often beautiful; but in poets as poets it is out of place. Some day perhaps we shall all see the difference between reticence and restraint.

These names do not cover all the good work here, but they would be my choice.

There is a Jindyworobak* manifesto. With Australian poets who aspire to treat the universal subjects of literature in a manner consistent with Australian conditions I am wholly in sympathy, so long as the consistency they demand is not rigid or specific. Parochialism is bad; so is distortion of facts. I do not like this harping on the oppressiveness of the European tradition. We Australians are most of us Europeans, whether we like it or not; and for us the difference in value, whether æsthetic or practical, between the European tradition and any that can with accuracy be called purely Australian is enormously large in favour of Europe. Besides, even if it were desirable, we cannot turn into aborigines; and if we could and did, we should inevitably go the way they have already gone. To do Jindyworobak justice, it does not advocate quite so drastic a step as this, at least not in such crude terms; but it does seem to lay stress on the throwing off rather than the adjustment to ourselves of what we have derived from Europe, and this is not conducive to the balance of the mind. The finest work in *Phoenix* is vividly Australian; but there is no geographical priggishness about it; it is vividly Australian because it is done finely by Australians; and it is done in a European manner. This is what my reactions tell me. I have ventured to make some small verses of my own in this connection, as follows.

KANGAROO MY TOTEM.

As I stand here on the hill-top in the very early morning
The shadows of the gum trees
Shape themselves like kangaroos:
Magic of the Land!
Kangaroo my totem, kangaroo,
Keep from the Land
Not only the gods and the traditions of Europe,

* The Jindyworobak Club, Adelaide.

Asia, North and South America and Africa,
 But also their inhabitants! Protect me, totem!
 I prefer to be purely, simply Australian.
 Kangaroo my totem, kangaroo,
 Change me first to an aborigine
 With lubra, with humpy
 In a great silence;
 Then make me truly
 A kangaroo.
 When shall I feel in my hams
 An inclination to hop?

But to return.

The appearance of these young people raises a question as to what we in Australia are likely to do with and for them. They have appeared at a dreadful time; but for such as they the best of times in this country have been bad. One has heard it implied that Australia was waiting for a poet; if this is so, she has waited with equanimity. As a people, as a community, we care little or nothing for poetry. No doubt good historical reasons may be found for such a state of things, as they may for any state of things we choose to consider; but this neither alters the fact nor makes the position desirable. Poetry is the finest language of a people. The poets have arrived; and until their arrival is widely felt to be important, to be an asset to the people as a whole, they will not only be without due honour in their own country, they will have no more than a slender chance of further development. The word is an act not only of a speaker but also of an audience, for speaker grows from audience as a plant from the earth; and where the soil is thin growth is sure to be stunted. Still, these young people have already achieved something. We may be glad of what we have got.

C. R. JURY.

"IF IT WERE DONE, WHEN 'TIS DONE."

Macbeth, ed. by Bernard Groom. (The New Clarendon Shakespeare. Clarendon Press. Oxford, 1939, 2s.)

THE main purpose of this edition is to present the text of *Macbeth* "in such a way that it can be easily read and understood", and the difficulties of the beginner have been kept in mind. This purpose has been served mainly by short notes at the foot of each page explaining words and phrases. Longer notes appear consecutively in a separate section of the book, dealing with passages of sustained difficulty or with alternative interpretations which require fuller treatment.

The shorter notes are, in general, well chosen and helpful. Mr. Groom overcomes both the difficulty of omitting nothing that requires explanation and the commentator's temptation to gloss what needs no explaining. This is not to say that there exist no otiose explanations

in the notes (e.g. of *peerless*, I.IV.58), or that no necessary explanations are omitted (e.g. *the rather*, I.VII.62); but these occurrences are rare. Occasionally notes are less helpful than they might be and, more frequently, they unnecessarily weaken the words of the text (e.g. I.IV.44, III.IV.139-40). Further, though the difficulty of explaining Shakespeare by paraphrase and with a minimum of linguistic explanation, must be fully admitted, it is not unreasonable to protest against paraphrases so free that the connection between text and paraphrase cannot be easily discerned. In one or two places the notes are unnecessarily misleading; for instance in I.II.15 the idea of a *fickle* smile simply does not come into the text. In II.II.40 surely the following line makes the meaning clear; sleep corresponds to the main course at a feast. How does the idea arise that labour is the first course? The idea put forward by Mr. Groom may be plausible, but a text-book for beginners is hardly the right place in which to present it.

The acceptance of an interpretation without due thought is shown particularly in the treatment of *shard-born*, III.II.42. This, as the editor says, is the one case in which the Oxford text has not been followed, *shard-born* being substituted for *shard-borne* on the authority of the O.E.D. (p. 13). That authority, of course, is very great, but it is not infallible. The O.E.D. is quite clear in the opinion that the meaning "carried by scaly wing-cases" was attributed to *shard-borne* by misunderstanding of this very line, and that the proper meaning of the phrase is "born in dung". But an editor should not stop at the acceptance of what he holds as a higher authority. How is the sense of "born in dung" to be worked appropriately into the context? Perhaps this is possible. We may suppose that the beetle is not necessarily flying, but simply making a noise, in spite of the probability that the "drowsy hums" are made by flying. Then we may argue that the reference is simply to a creature of foul origin, obedient to the summons of Hecate, and, in Macbeth's imagination, part of the night which will see done a "deed of dreadful note". Even if we conceded this, however, there remain the occurrence of *shards* in *Antony and Cleopatra* (III.II.20) and *sharded* in *Cymbeline* (III.III.20), both with reference to the beetle, and both meaning "wings" with hardly any possibility of doubt. On the evidence the usual and traditional interpretation must stand. Yet Mr. Groom deserts it for no other reason that one can see, than that he happened to come across a different opinion in the O.E.D. In any case there is in Dr. Onions' *Shakespeare Glossary* lexicographical authority in favour of the usual interpretation equal to that of the O.E.D.

The longer notes provided at the end of the book are valuable and helpful. Occasional linguistic explanation is competent and aptly given. The *Introduction* contains brief and clear information about date, sources, text and plot. At the end of the book there are

provided a wide selection of critical opinion on the play, and useful appendices on Shakespeare's life and works, his language, metre, and a group of selections from Holinshed. The appendix on Shakespeare's language, written by Dr. C. T. Onions, is particularly valuable. Dr. Onions explains the necessity for paying particular attention to language and the danger of misunderstanding Shakespeare's meaning through neglect of that study. He then gives, in small space, a surprisingly large amount of information about those characteristics of Shakespeare's language which must be carefully noted and constantly borne in mind, particularly by the beginner.

A. G. MITCHELL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR FRIENDS, ONCE MORE.

The Editor,
Southerly.

Dear Sir,

In the interests of scientific accuracy the tissue of errors which constitutes Mr. Oliver's review of my edition of *King Henry V* ought to be corrected.

The need for a new modernized edition is demonstrated by the numerous corrections of both text and notes which have had to be introduced. Due weight was given to previous criticism and to earlier editions. Mr. Oliver has not unearthed a single mistake. The references to Shakespeare's conscientious use of the chronicles, to the scenery used, to the Elizabethan ideal of the man of action and to the phrase "to be staled" are well supported by expert authority. For example, Boas remarks that "Shakespeare follows Holinshed with singular fidelity in the serious parts of the action".

Mr. Oliver is mistaken in attaching considerable value to the first quarto, which has no authority comparable to that of the first folio. The first quarto has been the source of many errors, and Professor J. Dover Wilson calls it "a bad quarto". Mr. Oliver is wrong also to infer that I did not know and consult the work of Chambers; in fact, all of his inferences are erroneous.

The "plain error" which Mr. Oliver thinks he detects as to the residence of Shakespeare with the French wigmaker Montjoy at the time of writing *King Henry V* is made by Mr. Oliver. The Cambridge edition quotes the American (C. W. Wallace) who announced this significant discovery to the effect that "Shakespeare himself lived at the time when *Henry V* was written with a French family, possibly refugee Huguenots, named Montjoy". The term of this residence "is said to have extended from 1594 to 1604". The internal evidence of

the French scenes and of the French constructions is corroborative. *King Henry V* was written in 1599.

There are no inaccurate generalizations regarding the distinction between prose and verse in Elizabethan texts, or regarding anything else.

Mr. Oliver's interpretation of "*He passes some humours, and careers*" is unfortunate. He is wrong to despise the "Elizabethan comma" which is fatal to his view. That my interpretation is correct is evident from the earlier line of the same character, Nym, referring to the venting of the King's *humours*. "*Humours*" were forms of bodily fluid that, according to the current theory, had to be discharged in order that one may *career*, or gallop on one's way rejoicing.

In the course of a long experience, I have never seen such a misleading review.

Yours faithfully,

PERCIVAL R. COLE.

[Comment by the reviewer: There is really very little in Dr. Cole's letter to answer, for he continues to produce only editorial opinion to support his ideas—and editorial opinion is not evidence. His assertion that his views are supported by expert authority carries no weight when the question of what constitutes expert authority is one of the many at issue. Since counter-assertion would be futile, I prefer to take two of the points and show the type of error Dr. Cole commits.

(1) I objected to the statement that in *Henry IV* Shakespeare mingled comedy with *conscientious* history. Dr. Cole insists that he is right, but he now twists it to "conscientious use of the chronicles"—a different matter, since Shakespeare sometimes follows Holinshed where he is wrong. But Dr. Cole is wrong in any case, as can be shown if I mention just a few of the changes Shakespeare made in *Henry IV*.

(a) He placed the interview between King Henry and the Prince (III.ii) before the battle of Shrewsbury in 1403, whereas the chroniclers place it in 1412.

(b) He confused the two Edmund Mortimers.

(c) He represented Hotspur as about Prince Henry's age, whereas Hotspur was in reality about 20 years older than the Prince and 2 or 3 years older than the King.

(2) On the Mountjoy question, Dr. Cole quotes the Cambridge editors who quote Professor C. W. Wallace who quotes the actual records, a study of which would show Dr. Cole that Professor Wallace's conclusion is not backed up by the evidence and is at best a possibility. This method of arriving at decisions seems to me about as conscientious as Shakespeare's history.

I think it is clear that Dr. Cole's exposition of his views does nothing to increase confidence in his conclusions. For example, I was

amused at his view that "casques" in the prologue to *Henry V* might mean "casks of gunpowder"; now, in *Some New Interpretations of the Text of Shakespeare's King Henry V*, Dr. Cole writes: "The poet's meaning, whatever it may have been, would have been clearly revealed by the actor who spoke the prologue. If *casks*, he might make a sweeping gesture to indicate the wooden O, followed by a circular movement to indicate the kegs, before the actor 'exploded', leaping upward with arms outstretched."

"In the interests of scientific accuracy", I should dearly love to see a demonstration.—H. J. OLIVER.]

THE AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH ASSOCIATION, SYDNEY.

PERSONAL NOTES.

We congratulate our Life President, Sir Mungo MacCallum, on entering his eighty-seventh year. Long may he flourish!

Congratulations also to Mr. H. M. Green on being appointed the first Lecturer in Australian Literature at the University. Mr. Green's work as a historian and critic of our literature, and his own contributions to it, are too well known to need particular mention. An article by him appears at page 15.

It is with similar satisfaction that we note the award of the Australian Literature Society's annual Medal to Mr. R. D. FitzGerald, for his volume of poems, *Moonlight Acre*, published last year. A poem by Mr. FitzGerald is printed on page 4 of this issue.

We take pleasure in welcoming home from England, where he has spent the past two years, our former Editorial Secretary, Dr. A. G. Mitchell. At London University he took the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and the Diploma in Phonetics. He has now resumed his duties as a Lecturer in English at the University, also as Editorial Secretary, and he has been appointed Assistant Editor of *Southerly*, in the room of Mr. H. J. Oliver, who has resigned.

Copies of Mr. R. G. Howarth's public lecture on *The Tempest*, issued by the A.E.A. in 1936, are still available from Dr. Mitchell at the University, from the Hon. Secretary, and from booksellers. *The Tempest* is the Shakespearian play to be studied for the Leaving Certificate this year.

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JULY, 1940.

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EDITORIAL.

At a recent meeting of the Association, the second number of *Southerly* was discussed by members. In the course of the discussion it was suggested that there should be an endeavour to make the magazine more unconventional—that it should be thrown open to “radical” writers, experimentalists, “futurists”, and the like. The Editors’ reply was that it had never been their policy to reject contributions by writers of these kinds, and that if any such contributions were submitted, they would be given due consideration and be printed if, in the opinion of the Editorial Committee, they were of sufficient merit. It may be as well to elaborate this statement and show that *Southerly*, while it must preserve its character as the magazine of the Australian English Association, is not conventional in design and will be as liberal as it is possible to be in the matter of “new” literary attempts.

In England, the Central Body has—to judge from its annual Presidential Addresses—somewhat unwisely set its face against modern poetry, if not against modern literature in general—using the term “modern” in the very narrow sense in which it is commonest nowadays. True, that Body published *Poems of To-day* and *The Modern Muse*, anthologies which have had a general currency and a wide influence; but *To-day* is now *Yesterday* and *Modern* is certainly not all-inclusive, though the book concerned makes a half-hearted attempt to include the most famous—or, according to the point of view, the most notorious—of recent writers. Now it is safe to say that, so long as the more catholic element has a voice in its affairs, the Australian English Association will commit itself to no such condemnation of modern experiment, though it will naturally claim full rights of criticism; and the policy of the Association is, in general, the policy also of *Southerly*. The present Editors will give an open welcome to verse or prose of any kind, and will print what they can of it. They must, of course, observe ordinary decency, they do not feel called upon to publish political views, as such, and mere imitation of English or American literary successes will not impress them; but obscurity, oddness of form or expression, complete unortho-

doxy in whatever shape will not debar any contribution from a place in the magazine. The more original the work sent to them is, the better.

But this must not be taken as an encouragement for writers to set to work and produce weirdness out of their own substance. Novelty for novelty's sake is surely as bad as conventionality for conventionality's sake. Let us have new, queer, startling—even perhaps (in one sense) shocking—contributions, but let there be, in every instance, a reason for the newness, queerness, and whatever else. There are two rules to remember: English (unless this is expressly deserted) should be written, and it should be written as well as possible.

A DREAM.

Unwound the long evolvment,
Mankind was fish again,
Gilled in the fluid prison,
And half absolved from pain.

No rapture and no music,
Nor agonised despair,
No conscience and no dreaming,
No ecstasies of prayer.

No love to flail the pulses,
Nor love that calms the breast,
But cold mechanic motion,
And cold mechanic rest.

Awake I cried to Heaven,
"God, spin Thy spiral fast,
Lest, flinching or lethargic,
Man slides into his past!"

"E."

THE WITCH.

By H. DRAKE-BROCKMAN.

I HEARD of her when I was apple-packing down amongst the big timber. I packed very badly. You have no idea of the malicious way the little beasts jump out of their places just when you think you have them nicely set! I wasn't earning keep, it took me thirty minutes to grade and pack a case of ruddy Jonathans. The two local girls could do one in seven. . . . Do you know there is a seven-five pack, and a five-five pack? It's an art, apple-packing. There were charts for beginners hung up on the great karri posts of the shed. No one ever looked at them, of course, except me. But I liked the work. It was clean work.

The smell of the packing-shed made you think of the Garden of Eden, and of Christmas parties when you were very young and of horses and of cider-wine bubbling into goblets at tables set with silver and damask, old-fashioned white damask all over the table. It was exciting. The piles of fruit on the bench running the length of the shed; the swift motion of girls' hands choosing, rejecting, packing. The voices of men floating in from the orchard. The arrival of the cart with plunder of fresh-picked apples, the bloom still sweet on their cheeks.

Adam picks the apple nowadays, and leaves Eve to pack. But every now and then Eve still seems inclined to take a bite! Adam does too, for that matter. There were so many apples that even old grey Caesar, pulling the fruit-cart, had a good share to munch from the Tree of Knowledge. Whether that was responsible for his sagacity is an open question, but no one ever had to tell that horse anything, he knew his way about. I wove fancies round the possibility of a different world-history if there'd been a bumper crop in Eden: a little knowledge, you know—and one apple, well, one apple seemed simply preposterous, down there in the orchard!

It was exciting! The great stacks, roof-high, of karri boards fresh from the mill, ready for the hands of the case-

maker who stood, hammer, hammer, hammer, at his bench. The gay little squares of tissue, jade-green and salmon-pink and white. Salmon-pink and waxed for thin-skinned Cleopatras, white or green for Jonathans or Democrats or small sweet Yates's, gay little coats to carry them across the world, at that time still a world in which apples could afford to travel. . . . The labels and the stencils: we were packing fruit for the shops of Berlin, of Prague, of Vienna. Of course it was exciting! And outside, not very far outside, the forest watched. The uncut forest, centuries old, and stubborn. . . . I was *very* slow at my job. And I stopped altogether when one of the girls said:

"I promised Mum I'd call at Aunt Jezabel's on the way home."

You must understand I collect names, like some people collect postage-stamps; and with rather more genuine amusement. Aunt Jezabel! How could a name-collector go on packing apples? Besides, the brutes weren't behaving well, they seemed bewitched, the way they'd jump out and have me starting that layer all over again. . . .

"Did you say your Aunt's name was Jezabel?" I demanded.

The girl laughed. "Too right. She's me grand-aunt, though. Me great-grandfather called her out of the Bible, it was the only book he had. And I reckon he'd about run out of names, having had twelve to think of before Auntie Jez."

The lust of the collector rose in me.

"Do you think . . . do you think . . . would your Auntie mind if I called on her?"

The girl flushed a little. She was very slim and pretty, her finger nails painted red as the Democrats. But she remained country-honest. "*She* wouldn't. But *I* might . . ."

"Why?"

"Well . . . she's a bit bats at times, she lives on her own. She's—she's—"

"Never mind", I said quickly. "Relations can be snags, I know."

She was a charming girl. She laughed at herself. She said: "Why should I worry? You're a bit queer yourself

over the things you like, aren't you? And the things you think of? You might as well meet Auntie, if you want to. And if she'll answer."

"If she'll answer—what do you mean?"

Red-Nails laughed as she shoved her trolley back, called for her beautifully graded, exquisitely fitted case to be moved and an empty fetched. "Wait and see", was the best I could get.

Jezabel's house stood away from the track, in a clearing littered with the trunks of unburnt giants. The ring-barked spectres of what had once been living trees made a grey ghostly guard for the fallen. It wasn't very late, but the light had gone out—except in the high branches—in the dismal way light seems to vanish in the forest. Soon a grey mist would rise up from the earth and hang between the trees like spider-webbing. Jezabel's house had never been finished. Sawn timber, greyed by weather, door and eyes: you know what those bush houses are—bleak faces, surprised, dismayed, beaten, or still with their teeth set? You know those faces, you see them all over the place, anywhere you like to go in the bush. Aunt Jezabel's was a grey skeletal face, not even grinning, just blank.

"Her father built it her when she was going to get married", Red-Nails apologised. "Then the feller died, and it was never finished."

"Why—you mean she wouldn't . . .?"

"Oh, no. They were too busy to bother. She stopped on home for a long time and nobody lived here. Then one day she shifted up on her own without saying anything, and they were glad enough, seeing she never did say anything half the time—sort of gets people down, silence."

Silence! Got them down—and I thought them the most silent people I'd ever met, the forest people! Aunt Jezabel's silence must have been close-up that of the grave. It grew round us there: a silence that stilled human tongues: a forest-silence that dared you to speak.

We went round to the back. The door was shut. There wasn't a plant or a pot in sight.

"Just like Auntie!" said Red-Nails. "She's been here forty years on her own—there's lots she could tell you. If you're lucky."

We knocked and we called. Nothing happened. Not even the hessian over the window stirred. The light faded on the upper branches.

Red-Nails made a face at me. "Shall I go?" I whispered.

"Oh, no. She's like this when I'm on me own. Now you know!"

"What does she *do*?" I asked. And felt horribly caught-out, for the door flew open and there stood Aunt Jezabel.

I was suddenly glad, instead of sorry, that her grand-niece lacquered her nails in the mode of the century.

I can't remember what Jezabel wore on her body, all I remember is the straw hat with its high peaked crown and the face underneath, nut-crackery, brown as jarrah, a beard grey on the chin like the wispy mist in the forest; and a pair of sparkling eyes live, in that shrivelled husk of a face, as a girl's eyes. They ran over me and danced. I couldn't believe Aunt Jezabel: she was too complete to be real! What did she *do*? She could only have been brewing witches' broth! I wanted to go inside at once and see for myself.

But we weren't asked. We had to go right out and stand on the barren earth. She wasn't having us inside. She was silent, all right. Red-Nails tried her with home news, tried her with me and my queer tastes. I tried her with history: hadn't she lived in the forest for fifty years?

No, she'd lived here for nearly eighty. She'd come as a little girl, after the flood. Could she tell me of that? "Three was drowned", she said in her falsetto voice, giggling suddenly. "And the fire got two . . ." The fire? What fire? Fire in the forest meant drama. . . .

She wouldn't answer. Her sparkling eyes danced and danced: you couldn't feel comfortable, seeing the life of them in that withered face, above that beard, those lips. Eighty years! Into the forest with the first men, before a single tree was felled. . . . And all afternoon, we'd been packing export apples for Europe. . . .

Red-Nails shrugged. "Mum said to see if there was anything you wanted, Auntie Jezabel?"

"What should I want?"

"Oh, anything. You've not been anywhere for days."

She giggled, did Jezabel. "That's what you think. You know nothing. Did you know Johnnie Ryce was dead?"

"Killed by a tree he was felling. Yesterday."

"That's what they say", mumbled Jezabel. "That's all they know. . . . A tree in the forest. . . ."

Red-Nails tugged at my wrist. "Come one", she said. "It's no good stopping. She's not going to tell you any stories."

"It gets them", said Jezabel. "It gets them." This time she laughed out loud. "I went up to Ryce's", said she. "I went straight away up to Ryce's. It didn't hurt young Johnnie, the tree. Not to spoil him." She thrust her face close to mine, her eyes like the eyes of a girl at a party. "He made a beautiful corpse", she said. And her laugh rang out like a girl's laugh teasing a lover.

"Oh, come on", said Red-Nails. 'I'm going into town to the pictures tonight. I'll be late. . . . Good-night, Auntie Jez. . . ."

It was almost dark. Night falls quick in the forest. A mopoke called, lost in the dark depths. Three flying-foxes skimmed out of the forest and circled back. A hundred years was nothing to the forest. . . .

"A beautiful corpse", Auntie Jez called after us, laughing.

"It's 'High Jinks on Broadway' tonight", said Red-Nails. "It ought to be good. I love up-to-date films with a bit of life about them, don't you?"

Laughter pursued us, thin as the mist.

I drew a firm young arm through mine and admired the little red nails.

"Yes", I said warmly. "I do."

CHORALE.

The sun this day with brandished burning torch
 (O fire of bronze, o lustre hymeneal!)
 Scatters the crowded phantoms from the porch
 And lights the shimmering pavement of the real.

A woman from the Arabian Nights, that wore
 The sunlight and the moonlight as a dress,
 Goes by in rags and charms the king no more,
 Defeated by a natural caress.

Your virgin hand, o love, has stripped my days
 Of dreams too sodden-rich to live in air:
 Look! where the nudity of sight displays
 The wealth of nations in a stranded hair.

I with the light prepare my long descent,
 The early moon still pale before the sun
 Prefigures the white arms of your consent
 And like your blush the evening colours run.

Under the stained-glass azure like a sigh
 Fern-odours stray from the voluptuous hill
 With intimations that the night is nigh;
 The flimmering stars when Priapus is still.

J. McAULEY.

With voice or verse, as near or far,
 I vainly persevere,
 Seeking the eloquence of love—
 But you are wiser, dear.

Either no words can tell our hearts,
 Or we shall never find
 What Browning, Donne, Rossetti knew,
 And none has since divined.

So let us dialogue with eyes—
 True interlocutors—
 And hold no talk while each, intent,
 The other's soul explores.

Here in the deeps of mine are hid
 The thoughts I cannot speak;
 Move them to music with your gaze,
 And answer as I seek.

R. G. HOWARTH.

AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH.

THE Editors of *Southerly* invite its readers to co-operate in the collection and definition of words peculiar to or having a special connotation in Australian speech and writing.

Investigation of the Australian vocabulary both in spoken and written usage has been going on uninterrupted for at least some forty years, since Professor Morris of Melbourne published his pioneer dictionary, *Austral English*, in 1898. In 1913 Sir Mungo MacCallum's work on the subject was embodied in Funk and Wagnall's *New Standard Dictionary*. For the most recent and authentic account of the Australian vocabulary we are indebted to Professor E. R. Holme and his consultants, the late Professor J. Le Gay Brereton and Mr. H. M. Green. The result of their investigation, extending over many years, is incorporated in Webster's *New International Dictionary*, 1936.

Their work is as complete and accurate as patient research, wide reading and observation, and expert scholarship can make it, but the amount of it that has appeared in print is limited by the policy of the editors of the Dictionary. Besides enabling Australians to understand their own colloquial and special terms, such work fulfils the very important function of making known to readers in other English-speaking countries characteristic terms found in Australian literature.

A sufficient number of interested people, reading and observing, could bring the known list of Australianisms nearer to completeness. By co-operative effort we may hope to add considerably to our present knowledge of the subject. Readers of *Southerly*, therefore, and any others interested, are invited to contribute to the magazine accounts of words which, to the best of their knowledge, are Australian in origin or have a characteristically Australian meaning or usage. It is suggested that the contributions should be, as nearly as possible, in the form of a dictionary entry, containing (a) pronunciation,¹

¹ The best means of indicating pronunciation is the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Failing this, the system used by any good dictionary might be used, but, to avoid uncertainty, the name of the dictionary should be specified.

(b) origin if discoverable, (c) meaning, and (d) specification of books or magazines in which the word occurs. Contributions will be carefully sifted and investigated by reference to Webster's *Dictionary*, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, and dialect and colloquial English dictionaries of various kinds. In this Professor Holme has offered us the benefit of consultation with him. If, after such investigation, the Editors are convinced that the word in question is a genuine Australianism and of sufficient interest, the contribution will be published in *Southerly* over the name of the contributor.

It is suggested that those interested should cast their nets wide, and not consider even slang beyond the limits of their investigation. What we most want, however, are colloquial words which have a fairly wide currency and are useful. Many slang words would be too narrow in their application and too ephemeral to warrant inclusion. As a rough guide we give the following list of the classes into which Australianisms already known seem to fall:

(1) Ordinary English words with a special connotation, e.g. *old identity*.

(2) English (and Scottish) dialect words, e.g. *moke*, *smoodge*.

(3) Popular names of plants, birds and animals, e.g. the vine *wait-awhile*.

(4) Words borrowed from aboriginal dialects, e.g. *billabong*.

(5) Words originating in Australian colloquial speech, e.g. *dinkum*, *cocky* (farmer).

(6) Words originating in soldiers' slang, e.g. *Anzac*, *digger*.

(7) Compounds peculiar to Australian usage, e.g. *bush lawyer*, *bush telegraph*.

(8) Words of unknown origin which are believed to have been started in Australia, e.g. *larrikin*.

(9) New formations, e.g. *finalise*.

(10) Grammatical usage peculiar to Australia, e.g. in England, there is reason to believe, the verb *to shear* is becoming a weak verb with past tense *sheared*, whereas in Australia it is still a strong verb with past tense *shore*.

Australia has made some contribution to the English vocabulary, both by the invention of new and useful words and by a special use of old words derived from various sources. It is hoped that by the scheme we have outlined it may be possible to arrive at a more complete estimate of that contribution.

A. G. MITCHELL.

'T FOR TIGER.'

Glory of the alphabet,
Tiger I remember yet
Towering in recumbent scorn
'Twixt the Snake and Unicorn.

Ribbed with midnight and with fire,
Yet no Gorgon vision dire,
But a brooding mystery
Flaming through my infancy;

Splendour growing with my youth,
Baring neither sabre tooth
Nor the terror of the claws
Hidden in those velvet paws;

All my life my wondering soul
Feels your burning look's control,
Sees that regal visage loom
Through the hours of light and gloom.

Slouching lion, had your race
Such a strength-ennobled grace?
Or your heavy, torpid gaze
Tiger-lightning's verdant blaze?

Yet, too awful to be mild,
Mine was not a tiger wild,
And no challenger's advance
Stoked the furnace of his glance.

So I still remember well
How he held me with the spell
Of the floating, Asian dreams
In his eyes' unwinking beams.

Questions strange they seemed to pose
 Far beyond the range of those
 Orthographic riddles raise
 In our kindergarten days.

Like the music of the spheres
 Came his purr to fancy's ears,
 Or the ocean's organ tone
 Brooding through the night, alone.

Why did he wake in my breast
 That vague feeling unexpressed
 All my years may not outgrow—
 Life hints more than e'er we know? . . .

In the primer laid aside
 Lo! no more would he abide,
 But a second jungle find
 In the mazes of my mind.

Sometimes through its depths to creep,
 Sometimes through its fringe to peep,
 Till like twin-moons towered his eyes,
 And his shade fell from the skies!

Though the page I loved to con
 Long ago to dust has gone,
 Still the Afreet tiger broods
 Over all my pensive moods;

And I know now why he chose
 So to haunt me to life's close;
 Now I know of what he thinks,
 Childhood's Tiger, manhood's Sphinx!

F. J. H. LETTERS.

ONSLAUGHT.

Gentler than Argument,
 Let Faith beware;
 He has his hammers,
 She has but prayer.

Young and audacious,
 He brings his might;
 Lit in the heavens,
 She holds her light.

"E."

THE STUFFED MOPOKE,
or
COMPETITIONS FOR THE COMPETENT.

A Divertissement Offered to the Association on May 13, 1940.

By R. G. HOWARTH.

SOME years ago Mr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis and Mr. Charles Lee published, in England, an "anthology of bad verse" which they called *The Stuffed Owl*. Adopting the idea and adapting it to Australian conditions, I wish to offer you a collection of my own, drawn from a single source, as a nucleus for a volume to be called *The Stuffed Mopoke*. These "poems" were entries in a public literary competition associated with an important point in the history of our country, and they came to my notice in a legitimate way. The competition brought hundreds of entries, representing an uncommon amount of mental and manual labour—in some instances, I was led to suspect, the latter only. Relatively few of them showed consistent merit, and there was no difficulty at all in choosing the two best, which were markedly superior to all the others. At the other end of the scale, a large number of pieces were thoroughly, horribly, and ludicrously bad, and their submission showed ignorance or impudence on the part of the writers. It may indicate, too, a lamentable decline in general poetic capacity. Australia used to be regarded as a country of poets, and even the roughest of colonial verse had some rhythm and feeling in it. Now it almost seems that people who have never written before set themselves to produce verse—not to express themselves as human entities or as Australians, but just as they might prepare entries for a guessing competition.

In illustration of particular sins, I shall take some individual examples first, then various significant groups of entries.

Although it was stipulated that only three entries should be submitted by each person, no fewer than eleven entries were received from one, the worst of it being that probably none of them was quite original. If so, this entrant proved

singularly unlucky in his choice of victims, for the eleven poems were on such topics as "What is Life to you?", "The fellow Who thinks he can", "We Can't Improve on Love", and they mostly ran like this:

The world is full of heroes
who suffer pain and loss;
I mean those everyday ones
that get neither medal or cross.

Some rhyming grammar had a particularly familiar ring:

Three Little Words you often see,
Are articles, "A", "An", and "The" . . . ;

but one noted for the first time that

Conjunctions Joins the Words together.

For his fruiterer's dozen this hopeful used only one pen-name; another, who submitted four poems, each of considerable length, used two, and, furthermore, went to the trouble of instructing the judges in the merits of his work. Thus all down the margins were explanations and comments; and one of his pieces was headed "The Great Australian Epic". Contrary to the opinion of the reader in every instance, he found a certain two lines "very fine", this stanza "excellent", that "a great conclusion", another "very good description", two together "very great stanzas", while there was constant direction to "notice the artistry", "note the metre effect", and, once, a triumphant question, "How far is this from pure poetry?" A reasonable estimate would probably have to be made in terms of light-years. Perhaps I am inappreciative, but I think this "great stanza", for example, considerably overpraised:

In that grey dawn they blazed across the sky
Like shooting meteors on the horizon
Which shone with splendour that can never die:
A beacon for the world to look upon.
The Light of Peace when self-conquest is won.
A paragon for ages yet to come.
That glory lingers though themselves have gone;
But earth is richer for their lives; and home
Was widened through Anzacs as broad as heaven's dome.

A second earnest and not unconceited writer appealed to his critics to "read right through" his poem: "in fact", he said, "it is worth a ponder regardless of its winning or losing

a prize". May I take this opportunity of assuring him, wherever he be, that I, for one, did read right through the poem, and that I do find it quite ponderous?

One could expect a competition like this to attract eccentrics. Of two who entered, the one had a religious and the other a musical bias. I have no wish to make fun of religion, but, after all, the author of the following lines submitted them as poetry:

The agony of her soul, at her *Son's* "*Crucifiction*"
Was hard to be explained to her Satisfaction.

("Crucifiction", by the way, seems to me a perfect, though lucklessly unintentional, Joyce-pun.)

Vision's of Rhythmic's of waving corn,
Its *poetry*, *Romance*, a *gift*, 'tis" born
A souls" expression, in thoughts and deeds
In writing, helps, inspires; "*others needs*".

I must say that no amount of scriptural reference (which is freely supplied) can explain this to my satisfaction.

But it was less distressing than the work of the musical man, who also worked in a certain amount of biblical cipherying, for example: "We figure the Alphabet a = 1 to z = 26 and find that Jesus 74 Christ 77 = 151 and re His Word I am the Alpha and Omega we must confess that the Messiah is a1 and G7 o14 d4 God figures 26 O.K. hence this Ode = 151"—reasoning which I, for one, find very difficult. But look at the poems! One on Anzac (Anzac, "Mind Ye!!") begins in this ingratiating manner:

'Neath Queen Victoria's Gracious Standard,—
The eighteen eighty eighth year,—
Victorious Records beam'd in Hansard;—
Would-soulful 'twere of late years.

Refrain:

Home's Flag Souls under stood . . .

Will anyone now complain of obscurity in Hopkins or Eliot? The piece continues:

Resound ye thoroughfares of Melbourne,—
Great Grace—Divine Regalia;—
Record Home's Grateful Crosses Well borne—
Of sound heart shaped Australia.

Refrain.

The Prince of Peace recited—Fear not!!—
 For,—I am always with Thee,—
 E'en unto vain World's end—thus hear what—
 Tells Arch Pacific Sydney.

Refrain.

God Grace Home's King with Sterling features,—
 Where smile hale sun beams kindly;—
 Grace—Gratitude—sing Anzac Creatures;—
 Recalls Britannia—Mind Ye!!

Refrain.

The last word is the very best advice one could give to the author of such an indiscretion—refrain. Yet it was written, he states, to music. Some of his sentences were so strange—far stranger than those quoted—that one could only conclude he was using words merely as musical counters—with a far from musical effect.

The next group of entries one may term "Childish Chirps". It is extraordinary that a child of twelve (who announces proudly that the poem is "original") should have been allowed to submit, in a national competition, this:

Listen to the rainelves pattering on the panes,
 They splash, and jump, and dance in fairy lanes. . . .

It is much more extraordinary, however, that adults should have perpetrated and entered poems about Pitty Pat and Tippy Toe, Mrs. Woof and her dogs' school, little flowers so sweetly blue, my Pet Lamb and The Dancing Thistledown. One person went so far as to submit a whole series of "Ballads for Bairnies", of which the gem was "Our Party Line (Slightly Stretched)":

Our line, it is a party,
 There's me, an' Bill, an' Arty,
 An' Jack, an' Bob, an' Joe, an' Tommy Hyde,
 An' as we all are married,
 With faces scared and harried,
 We've wives who use the tell-a-phone beside, etc.

There were even directions for illustrations to accompany this weird production, e.g.: "Woman with frying-pan, from which chops are falling among number of cats, using telephone: from woman's mouth:—'Yack, yack, yack'. Children half-dressed howling round." I could well imagine this gracing a tenth-rate comic paper.

Then come the bush balladists—are we ever without them?

Out on the Cowong Ranges,
Where the birds sing wild and free,
And the dingoes howl at night-time,
When the owl is on the tree.

There dwelt bonnie Mary, and we learn how she nobly preferred “the lad from the Warregoo” to the Squatter’s son.

By far the largest section of the entries in the competition consisted of poems on Australia or Australian topics. Most competitors seemed to think that something about Australia, or the occasion, or Governor Phillip, was required, and that it would be sufficient to express a few conventional sentiments in conventional language. Thus we have such titles as “Australia’s March to Nationhood”, “The Dawn of Australia”, “Australia’s Day”, “Australia Calls”, “Public Invitation”, “Australian Pioneers” (and doesn’t this remind us of Murdoch’s humorous complaint in his essay, “On Pioneering”?), “Sons of the Southern Cross”, “The Land of the Wattle”, “Aussies”, etc., ad lib., ad infin., ad naus. Patriotism in verse is very well, but really there is a simply frightful unoriginality in such poems. These lugubrious lucubrations were of all types, from popular songs to long rhymed chronicles. There was the bird who cried:

Let us all be happy, happy happy happy
Let us all be happy, happy gay and free
Let us all be happy, happy happy happy
While we Celebrate the birthday of Sunny Sydney.

(After this, I want to be miserable.) And there was the industrious historian whose pedestrian pen traced Our Nation’s Growth. He it is who informs us that Phillip

did introduce
Wheat farming; and it was James Ruse
Who first succeeded to expand
At Parramatta, on the land.
And John Macarthur skilfully
Designed our sheep-growth destiny.
Although adversities were cruel
Our foremost Gov’nor bravely ruled,
And thus shall Gov’nor Phillip be
An optimistic memory.

Perhaps the worst doggerel was called forth by patriotic sentiment. One may forgive the exuberant person who cries, in expectation of fun and frolic:

A party soon will come along, a birthday is in sight,
With 150 candles strong and every one alight;

or the other who wistfully celebrates the fertility of the colony with:

There is a green plantation, way over in the West
Where grow potatoes, wheat and grape vine
All of the very best
And vegetables are growing line by line
How I only wish that some of them were mine.

Creditable too, if a trifle shop-worn, are the sentiment and expression of:

As a poet, I'd write of Australia,
The gem of the southern seas;
Such verse could not be a failure,
One could write it with perfect ease. . . .

A land flowing with milk and honey,
Abounding with peaches and cream,
A climate that's warm, bright and sunny,
The farmlands the best that I've seen.

But, if we accept that, can't we have a law against this (exalting Australia)?

In tennis Jack Crawford stands out like a star,
Joan Hartigan too is our pride,
Hubert Hopperman, cycling, no matter how far,
Has shown the whole world how to ride.

In cricket, Don Bradman and Stanley McCabe
Have shown how to carry a bat;
Boy Charlton can swim like the crest of a wave,
Clare Dennis can also do that.

I protest, too, against being ordered to gird up my "lions" and build a "Greater Britian"; and I discern some falsification of history in the picture of "Ned Kelly riding on trusty Starlight". Then what can that writer be thinking of who speaks of one of Australia's sons as growing up to be a "Pioneer, soldier, statesman or worse"?

Something which the psychologists would perhaps call a "rabbit-complex" lies, it seems, behind this suggestive stanza:

Ye girls of British race
Famous for your beauty
Breed fast in all your grace
For this is your duty.

The writer is quite confident that:

As Anzac gave in war
So daughters at your call
Will quick respond the more
To replace those that fall.

I have not nearly exhausted the riches of my collection. A farrago of nonsense and mournful numbers will conclude this address.¹ The worst of it all is that no amount of criticism, perhaps, would persuade my involuntary contributors to *The Stuffed Mopoke* that their verses really merited that doubtful distinction. Should another opportunity present itself, no doubt they would, just as self-assuredly and just as hopefully, submit the same or similar productions. What they fail to realise is that there is no element of luck in a poetry contest. This is a trial of skill, not a game of chance. Competitions—particularly literary competitions—are for the competent.

¹ For obvious reasons, a few extracts only can be given here:

Refrain: Eureka!—Eureka!! Eureka!!!—
What tells th' Britannic Speaker?—
The Crown pure secured of Eureka!—
Honour graced the Seeker.
Found Sterling the Flag of Liberty;—
Seek Digger Sorts Britannia Free;—
Her Master Hands Act—Eureka!!!—agree!—
Foes sense Wit's flag—self sought all at Sea,—
Whiles Home's King—"Flags"—Master Charity!!!—

The Bush that burned was not consumed."—
So mused Dame England—headwards plumed,—
Whiles spray'd Her praised Castalia—
Pearl'd Stirlings of Australia;—
Heart shaped of Outline—speaks the Map;—
Yet Rue obtains through Song's mishap—
'Neath Wattle thrown of Colt—headlong—
Athirst!!—Eureka!!—Rise!! Gong Gong.

Glory of song and pageantry—
That rekes to me of lost arcady—
"Lyric, and dance; and pageantry."
That rekes to me of lost arcady.
(“Entree for Poem Competition.”)

Not all your records have stainless been and a page of
Englands History, will always be besmirched by
the memory of her ghastly convict ships—
The broken bodies and souls of men
dumped on your shores.—and spurned.
It were a rubbish tip.

TO EARTH.

The onward movement of the gyral sun
 Wants less of courage than the quail that spins
 Out of the stippled corn to windy air:
 Sun bears a torch through cold and darkening space—
 Flourish of searchlights on the farther stars—
 But quail is dark in light.
 Dragons that fly the silver fire that flames
 'Twixt sun and summer streams,
 Are colour for a day and dust at night.
 The corn runs green in ear,
 The winnowing year
 Showers beauty too rare
 To last beyond a harvest.
 Sheaves that spire
 Into the living blue above the hill,
 Close like dim churches on the cloistered fear
 Of mice, for whom that radiant air—
 A field sown thick and dark with hawks—
 Blooms only for destruction.
 The thrusting strength of stubble 'neath the shoe
 Is armed from earth and stronger than defeat.
 Deep earth, that works all winter long in dark
 At coloured map of summer marked in seeds;
 And sleepless, throbs
 Through too-brief summer nights when stars are down
 And magpies sing the rising of the moon;
 Pens the wild humours of the trees
 In web of windless calm; and moulds again
 Life for another season:
 Lambs to be dropped upon the quilted grass
 In spring, are wrought, with green to feed their flesh.
 Nightly, small rain comes avid to the hill-tops,
 Shrouds the unheeding stars from scrutiny,
 With western rhythm breaks across the wind
 In gentle discipline.
 Swither of wind light moving on the flowers
 Swings into power, to lead
 The day-long cloud that tireless, drives
 Its white and grey divisions overhead,
 Glad for that moment when the sun takes leave
 In full parade of colour and salute.
 Earth-anchored, oceans sink and yield at last
 To salt smell at landfall, and the warm
 Off-shore wind that rings of birds, and brings

Tidings of trees,
Of temples, beasts, and men.
Than these
Stars chained in deep space are not more absolute.

MARY FINNIN.

Corio, Victoria.

TWO WORLDS.

A little space in sight as we are now,
The shadowy eclipse of severed stars,
When for a night all light is blotted out,
And silence falls that no sound jars.

Too soon the night will end and words will shatter
The unifying silence that we hold,
The dissipating thought that cannot matter
Turns all that lives to mould.

We gravitate upon appointed paths,
Charted irrevocably at our birth
The tangency we seek comes with life's ending
In dark circumference of earth.

DOROTHY AUCHTERLOUNIE.

Not in those fields
Whose fortunate flocks delight
To hear the pipe young doting Daphnis plays,
Nor in faint summer's maze
Of leaves and light,
Where love, smiling, delays,
And pastoral beauty half her sweetness yields—
Not there, not there, but where the horned lean
Unpastured cattle of the deep descend
On sands deserted and loud promontories,
There, where the pulse of seas
Daunts the quick blood, one could be wise and wean
From hastening joy a heart that knows his end.

I. R. MAXWELL.

BROUGHT TO BOOK.

ANCIENT NOVELS.

Some Ancient Novels, by F. A. Todd. (Oxford University Press, 1940. 7s. 6d.)

I REMEMBER reading that a noted scholar (A. W. Verrall, I think) dreamed that he was travelling in a railway carriage, and that when the train pulled up at a station he heard the guard announce "Miletus!" Looking out of the window, he saw, in huge letters on a wall, EPIC CYCLE FACTORY. I do not know whether Miletus was connected with epic cycles, but it does seem to have been a factory for turning out light literature in novel-form—the sort of stories that were rife, a generation ago, in threepenny novelettes, and which now find their equivalent in "romantic" magazines and film sentimentalities.

The Milesian stories, known to the Greeks as *erotica*, seem to have taken their origin from an Aristides, who wrote, in the second century B.C., certain "Milesian" tales, the scenes of which seem to have been laid at Miletus, a kind of Asian Sybaris, noted for its gay life. Some of the stories, no doubt, came from oral tradition, while others were cullings from literature. Their tone was erotic, and, often enough, licentious. These tales developed into novels of which five have been preserved to us. They show that "Milesian" had, by the time they were written (about the second and third centuries A.D.), become merely the name of a species of fiction, since the author seems to have been entitled to tell anything, and lay his scene anywhere.

The influence of this kind of story passed over into Rome. Petronius' story of the *Widow of Ephesus* is in the Milesian vein, while Apuleius calls his *Cupid and Psyche* a *milesia*.

Professor Todd has rendered a valuable service in giving us an account of the Classical novel in general, and of four in particular, two Greek and two Latin—the *Leucippe and Clitophon* of Achilles Tatius; the *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus; the *Satiricon* of Petronius; and the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius. His book consists of four lectures delivered by invitation of the Sydney University Extension Board. This might imply that they are merely of a popular character; but that is not so. They are pieces of scholarship the excellence of which may be overlooked by reason of the simplicity of the presentation. Of his lectures he says himself: "They are quite unpretentious"; but the reader will find that the unpretentiousness is that of a mastery of the art of writing. The style is lucid and simple, but it is always exact and apposite. It is the kind of writing that reflects the best qualities of the language he has studied so long and so carefully, clarity of outline and absence of the irrelevant.

The book has been made readable not only for the lover of the Classics, but also for the lover of literature in general, since each of the tales discussed is admirably summarised. Too often, in books of this kind, the writer takes for granted a knowledge in the reader which he cannot reasonably be expected to have. He forgets that when he discusses a subject, his reader should first understand just what the subject is. Professor Todd has not made this mistake. The ordinary reader will find the stories plainly set forth in sufficient fulness to allow him to understand each point of the author's criticisms.

The appreciations of famous translations, such as those of Thornley and Adlington, will appeal to students of literary history, since they are discussed not only for themselves, but also for their relations with Elizabethan literature. In the matter of translation the reader will be delighted with some of Professor Todd's own renderings. They will hold their own with the best, and entice one into hoping that he will translate a complete tale for us.

As for the stories, the *Leucippe and Clitophon* type is quite obviously the meeting place of Hellas and the Orient, as Professor Todd reminds us. The general idea of the plot—lovers exasperatingly parted finally to meet again—has nothing particularly Asiatic about it. For that matter it is still popular on the films. But the general method of treatment shows a decline from the classic severity. Rhetoric and sentiment oust the true appeal to emotion, and prettiness is apt to supplant beauty. This, for instance, is how *Leucippe* is described: "The gleaming beauty of the peacock seemed to me nothing in comparison with *Leucippe's* lovely face; indeed, her beauty was rival of the flowers of the meadow. Her skin was bright with the hue of the narcissus, roses sprang from her cheeks, the dark gleam of her eyes shone like the violet, the ringlets of her hair curled more tightly than the ivy—*Leucippe's* whole appearance was that of a flowery meadow" (trans. Sir S. Gaselee). This brings to mind Marlowe's charming, but Dresden china-ish description of Hero—"her veil was artificial flowers and leaves". You will find throughout Professor Todd's book a full discussion of the various qualities of this kind of popular floridity—its somewhat obvious rhetoric, its delight in describing pictures, its digressions into quaint superstitions, such as the reason for the sweetness of the elephant's breath, the fable of the gnat and the lion, and that very lovely legend of the phoenix which passed over into Christian literature.

The Milesian tale involves also a combination of the wonder-tale with the love-tale, and the former gives scope for hazardous journeys and wild adventures. *Leucippe and Clitophon* takes full advantage of this motive, the absurdities of which, together with the fantastic rhetoric they generate, are fully set out by Professor Todd.

It is not easy to class *Daphnis and Chloe* with the Milesian Tales, for though it has some traits in common with them, it has such a pastoral innocence, such an absence of the garish, and such a sympathetic portrayal of country types, that one feels it is of the blood of Theocritus, and no disgrace to the Sicilian muse. I feel, at least, that it might have been a leaf-fringed legend to enchant Keats, it is so delicate in its outlines. The reader will not fail to get from Professor Todd's handling of the story its true flavour.

The most interesting of the four lectures is perhaps that on the *Satiricon*. Professor Todd has maintained convincingly the truly Latin character of this remarkable work. No doubt many of the Milesian Tales gave a picaresque flavour to some of their wild adventures; but Petronius' travelling rogues smack of the Menippean satire, or what we may reasonably suppose it to have been. Quite probably, too, there is something of a polished and filed Lucilius in Petronius. His satire on Roman vulgarity can be interchanged with his own exquisite artistry in a were-wolf tale, or in a description of Laocoon's death. I am inclined to think that of the four lectures the reader will most frequently return to this, so masterly is the handling of Petronius and his significance in the history of the novel.

Of the *Golden Ass* one feels that much or nothing must be written, so rich are its associations. There is first the fascinating personality of Apuleius himself with his strange mixture of euphuistic glitter and exotic mysticism. There is Adlington's classic translation; and there is not only Pater's picture of Apuleius, but also his translation of *Cupid and Psyche*, a thing that can never die while our literature lives. Nor can *Cupid and Psyche* itself ever die, for it is the perfect fairy-tale, a mixture of Cinderella with her two hostile (if not ugly) sisters, the Invisible Bridegroom, and the Impossible Task. It is true, as Professor Todd points out, that Apuleius makes Lucianesque mockery of the gods—Apollo is a "cold-blooded bachelor", Jupiter a "very naughty old gentleman", and Venus "a termagant". I think, however, that the deities mentioned would have laughed very heartily at the caricature, and quite nicely forgiven Apuleius. If the reader is unacquainted with Apuleius, and with his charming fairy-tale in particular, Professor Todd's lecture is well calculated to set him reading it at once.

We have long known the author of this book as a careful and exact scholar. It is a pleasure to find him applying his scholarship, together with a nice literary taste, to a work which will stand as one of the achievements of Sydney University.

L. H. ALLEN.

BLOOD AND SAND.

The Gift of Blood, by Max Harris. (Jindyworobak Club, Adelaide, 1940. 2s. 6d.)

The Miracle, by Brian Vrepont. (The Author, 1940.)

THESE two volumes of verse by Australian poets are pleasing because of the absence from their pages of a self-consciously aggressive Australianism and because of the recognition of poetry as an art, demanding, among other things, a mastery of technique. Not here are the jingle and the syllable-counting of the past; absent, too, are inflated sentiments and "poetic" language. An attempt to achieve sincerity, restraint, artistry of form and expression is evident in the work of both poets.

The Gift of Blood forms the first collected edition of the poems of Max Harris, who has previously published in various South Australian magazines. The piece which gives the collection its title is a "morality" of three scenes in which the persons are a Jew, Isaac, with the physical and emotional characteristics of his race, and a German, Ludovik, who receives the "gift of blood" in both senses. Our interest is caught, not so much by the working out of the theme, as by the abrupt transitions, the unexpected use of familiar imagery and of speech rhythms. Mr. T. S. Eliot, however, has done this sort of thing so well that it is difficult to avoid making adverse comparisons.

The rest of the poems in the volume are grouped into two sections; the one, entitled "Brahms Intermezzo", is composed mainly of love-lyrics, while the other, "Progress of Defeat", seems to have been occasioned by the Spanish Civil War.

Although Max Harris appears to lack the spontaneity necessary for complete success in the lyric, there are some quite beautiful poems in the second section, for example,

Let me not call you lovely. Be
the chaos of the dream that knows
nor nature nor lurid beauty.
be the cramped inturning of the rose
blown past full flare.
not smooth, your hair
a ti-tree storm, your lips a warm
log-fire fantastic burning in the pines
to the dingo-howl.
then no fear shows the signs
o so young
of drab time's scowl.

By contrast one feels that the Spanish Civil War did not stir the emotions of Mr. Harris very deeply, since in some of the poems which it apparently occasioned there is at times a certain artificiality; nevertheless it gave him an opportunity to experiment in rhythms, the newness and interest of which experiment, combined with a genuine felicity of phrase, compensate for other defects. One example should suffice:

We know no mithridatum of despair
 as drunks, the angry penguins of the night,
 straddling the cobbles of the square,
 tying a shoelace by fogged lamplight.
 We know no astringent pain,
 no flecking of thought's dull eternal sea
 in garret image, of Spain
 and love . . . now love's parody.

The Miracle, by Brian Vrepont, won the C. J. Dennis Memorial Prize, which was founded in Sydney on 10th October, 1938, and was first presented on the birthday of the late poet, 7th September, 1939. The poem has now been printed in a limited edition of fifty copies and one welcomes this opportunity of seeing it.

Brian Vrepont, whose work is not generally known, has taken for his theme soil erosion, which he views as the result of a struggle between greedy, rapacious man and earth,

that nothing pities

And nothing answers for—

a struggle which will result in hunger, famine and death, unless man casts from his heart "the congenital Beast".

The idea of man in conflict with nature is of course not new, but Mr. Vrepont stimulates interest by the introduction of symbolical figures—Death, and, perhaps, Fecundity—which ride together:

And round and round they go

Over the centuries' woes

Over the moment's glow.

This is varied with reference to the effect upon the individual person of the folly of mankind, either in the country—

Old Martha stood on her doorstep,

In a listless year-old way,

She swept the drift of sand

That sifted in all day,

or in the city—

The paralysed streets jerked in spasm

Of news-boys shrilling dead news

Stones cast into a chasm.

The poet's pessimism is relieved by his faith in evolution which enables him to visualise man's coming to an ultimate realisation of his and earth's mutual interdependence when he should have achieved perfection:

On the vast loom of Time's unhaste is spun

A creature conscious of its final shape.

Although this poem of some three hundred lines is in rhyme it never becomes monotonous, and this is because of Mr. Vrepont's skill in the handling of rhythm, in the employment of sound-harmony, and in the use of contemporary imagery. An example of the last is seen in

For then there was no fear,

Only a laughing discomfiture

Personal and immediate

As women in morocain

Caught in a summer rain.

LILIAN FLYNN.

BRENNAN.

The Premier Poet of Australia: C. J. Brennan, by Randolph Hughes. (The Poetry Society, London.)

IN his little book on Christopher Brennan, published by Angus and Robertson last year, Mr. H. M. Green duly referred to the work of his predecessors in this study, mainly to *C. J. Brennan: An Essay in Values*, by Randolph Hughes. "This book", he wrote, "is valuable, particularly as to the workings of Brennan's mind and his affinities with the French Symbolists, but it has certain conspicuous defects. Hughes is neither detached nor judicial; his manner of expression is inflated and supercilious, so that he may repel a reader who does not happen to be exactly of his turn of mind. Also, some of his incidental comments do not encourage one to accept his main critical conclusions. . . . Nevertheless", Mr. Green concluded, "Hughes' book should be read—with discrimination—by everyone who is interested in Brennan." To most of those here who had read the essay this seemed a fair enough summing up. It is at least obvious that the writer was trying to deal justly with a production which, after all, contained many an insult to Brennan's and Hughes' own country, and its institutions.

Now comes Mr. Hughes' reply and criticism of Mr. Green's book, reprinted as a pamphlet from *The Poetry Review* of March-April, 1940. To say the least, this is an intemperate document; to say the worst, it is an uncalled for piece of merely splenetic vituperation. Stung, apparently, by the inability of an Australian critic to bow to the surpassing merits of his study of Brennan, the writer retorts with all the violence of which he is capable, and, in so doing, as every fair-minded person must think, defeats his own end.

For example, he wastes half a page on the propriety of the use, after his name, of the letters denoting the University degrees possessed by the author. Since that use is mere convention, such girding seems puerile, and it is a pity that the Editor of *The Poetry Review* was so indiscreet as to publish it. Then, again, Mr. Hughes shows his annoyance with Mr. Green by referring contemptuously to the selections from his poetry appearing in *The Oxford Book of Australasian Verse*. As if they had anything to do with the matter! Really, Mr. Hughes does nothing at all here to inspire confidence in himself as a critic.

For a full and considered estimate of the book in question readers are referred to the first number of *Southerly*, wherein Mr. T. Inglis Moore, another student of Brennan, assigns it to the important place it deserves. Among the points on which Mr. Hughes so arrogantly joins issue with Mr. Green, I shall refer to only one—the matter of Brennan's Australianism. "Dismissing French influences as well-nigh negligible, Mr. Green", we read, "is at great pains to show that

Brennan was a true-blue Australian poet, that you can find the fair-dinkum goods in him . . . Distinctly Baudelairean verses in which Brennan apparently makes incidental reference to a library in which he worked are triumphantly flourished . . . as proof positive that the Australian environment was a source of inspiration for him! . . . In another poem Brennan makes some sort of allusion—highly sublimated—to a tram-ride in winter past a church to a building with a ‘four-turreted square tower’, and this also, to Mr. Green’s mind, is cogent and clinching evidence that the Australian environment plays a capital part in his poetry!” Even when listing other examples, Mr. Hughes makes no mention of his victim’s penetrating discernment of the true landscape of the Wanderer’s journey, which, we were told, is “that of the way between Manly and Newport as it was nearly forty years ago”. This impression of the writer’s found confirmation in the accounts of one of Brennan’s closest friends and a pupil of his, both of whom knew that Brennan had this setting in mind; and Mr. Green may mention this testimony with a legitimate touch of satisfaction. Another close friend, and colleague, of Brennan’s is equally sure that Mr. Green is right about the tram-ride, the church, and the tower. Surely no one would seriously maintain that Brennan lived in entire unawareness of his surroundings, that his country was poetry alone.

A word, in conclusion, of general self-defence. Brennan’s “so-called friends in Australia”, Mr. Hughes declares, “have lacked the little energy and enterprise required to bring out a new and complete edition of at least his poems, . . . although it is now more than seven years since he died.” Being out of touch with his native country, which he so vilifies, Mr. Hughes would not, of course, be aware of the widespread appreciation of Brennan here, among the discriminating, and of the efforts which have long been made to ensure that a worthy collection and edition of what he wrote shall be produced. He tends, unfortunately, to think of himself as *rara avis*, as the sole champion of Brennan—perhaps even as the proprietor.

R. G. HOWARTH.

CONTROL OF LANGUAGE.

The Control of Language, by Alec King and Martin Ketley. (Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1939. 3s. 6d.)

Most of us would claim that we “care for language”. But we care in different ways. To some few, language is a book in which the mind and life of a people records itself with inexhaustible variety, and in which three score years and ten is all too short a time to read. To others, language is a code whose value is in part social and in part aesthetic—we shrink from a vulgarism, bristle at an American intruder, raise a half-apologetic eyebrow over a split infinitive. And

to others again, language is a bottomless tool-box in which any workman, from the jeweller to the navvy, can find what he wants if he knows where to look for it.

But there is something more. Like every great force which we can partly control, language imposes a responsibility. In words we do our thinking, and by words we decide our actions. An "art of expression" which is not at the same time a discipline of thought, is at best an idle and at worst a dangerous plaything; and there is perhaps nothing which modern civilization needs more than the ability to see through the verbal confidence tricks by which we deceive ourselves and others.

The Control of Language (though written for schools, where truth is generally well draped) goes at once to the root of the matter. It begins at the beginning with a chapter on "How Language Works", and proceeds to tackle the whole problem of communication with a varied and amusing series of illustrations drawn less from literature than from common affairs. It brings the subject home to us. It will teach no unhappy reader that he must never begin a sentence with "and" or end it with a preposition; it will give him no excuse for imagining that, by careful Composition's artful aid, he can learn to write well when he has nothing to say; and it will force him to ask whether his statements are sincere and responsible or effectively deceptive. What is more, it will encourage him to practise statements of either kind, for a man who does not know a good deal about lying is not to be trusted with the truth.

The book turns on the distinction which has recently come into favour between "emotive" and "scientific" language, and the working-out is careful, practical and stimulating. Beginning with what we might call the prose of common affairs, it goes on to deal with the sort of prose which communicates personal feelings and judgments. From this point it is an easy step to a discussion of some of the main literary genres and some essential tools of the author's craft.

Although it may sometimes seem too advanced for schoolchildren, I should like to see *The Control of Language* widely used in schools. If it were used intelligently, it might make an appreciable difference to the mind of the next generation. It would teach young people to think, in teaching them to think about the words they use; and it would give them a foothold in modern literature. It is an excellent thing that they should proceed, from a page or two of Dickens, to a poem by Auden or MacNeice, and in either case with the simple object of discovering how the craftsman is using his tools. And, what is more, no one could read this book without learning something of the outlook which characterizes much modern literature, and with which we as well as our children will have to reckon.

We, as well as our children. This book is emphatically not for children only, and its authors have good reason to hope that "it will be of value also to first-year students at the University, and to any

one who feels himself to be still a student of the English language". The last phrase is wide enough to cover many who have left their first year far behind them.

I. R. MAXWELL.

ANTHOLOGIES FOR SCHOOLS.

A Book of French Verse. Ed. with Vocabulary and Notes by A. Carey Taylor. (Melbourne University Press, 1939. 3s. 6d.)

Path to Parnassus. Ed. with Introduction and Notes by Furnley Maurice. (Melbourne University Press, 1940. 3s.)

In the *Introduction to Path to Parnassus* "Furnley Maurice" writes that "the study of poetry develops an intuitive awareness of things". His selection of English verse and Dr. Taylor's selection of French verse, both for use in schools, are designed to develop this awareness in the Australian school pupil, and to provide him with criteria for the recognition of great poetry wherever he encounters it.

The *Book of French Verse* is planned to fulfil the needs of pupils of all ages, from the very young for whom the songs and rounds of Part I are included, to advanced students for whom the more difficult poetry of reflection is given. The four sections of the book are not, however, mutually exclusive, for Dr. Taylor says in the foreword that the student may benefit from excursions into any part, since "the essential thing is that the pupils should read the poems they can best appreciate".

The choice of poems can be commended, for the book includes not only such well-known poems as *Le Papillon*, *L'Expiation*, and *Le Lac*, but also examples of the work of the less widely known (at least to English readers) poets such as Emile Verhaeren and Charles Peguy.

The vocabulary and notes are adequate, but the latter consist too often merely of suggested translations. The introduction is concerned mainly with describing for beginners the technical aspects of French verse. It is clear and concise, and should prove helpful to pupils when supplemented by the teacher's illustrations, but the treatment of English prosody, included to mark the strong contrast between French and English verse, is liable to cause some misapprehension in the mind of the young reader. It is difficult to conceive that such a line as

"Now *all/the youth/of Eng/land are/on fire/*"

can be regarded by Dr. Taylor as an example of regular English verse rhythm; rather than conclude that his ear is so insensitive, one would set down his method of illustrating the technique of French verse by such exaggerated contrasts, as, to say the least, unfortunate.

"Furnley Maurice's" *Introduction* is less preoccupied with technicalities, its main feature being a competent treatment of the functions of poetry and an indication to the student of what to expect from the reading of it. "Furnley Maurice" realizes the psychological value to the school child of the communication of significant experiences through art, and accordingly he has classified and grouped the poems in a manner calculated to induce thought and appreciation.

Not only English writers, but also American and Australian writers, are well represented, and an innovation that merits the applause of teachers is the inclusion of a poem—alas, only one—by Christopher Brennan, whose work, outside literary and academic circles, is practically unknown. But "Furnley Maurice" has not scorned to include also such well-known poems as Kipling's *If* and the "Breathes there the man" lines from *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* because the more sophisticated reader regards them as hackneyed. Such passages contain the expression of some of mankind's fundamental thoughts and feelings, and the child brings to them an unjaded mind capable of appreciating them very keenly.

The compilation of footnotes seems to be haphazard rather than systematic, for the obvious is often explained, while the difficult is passed over. As such books are generally studied under the guidance of the teacher, compilers would do well to remember that complete absence of notes is preferable to inadequate and therefore misleading notes, while completely comprehensive notes would necessarily double the length of the book.

The technical shortcomings of both books are regrettable, because the selections, for their avowed purpose of school study, are in themselves good. The publication of text-books for Australian schools is a move in the right direction. As a nation we have our individual educational problems that can be solved only by writers and editors who are familiar with them. The standard anthologies, whatever their general excellence, are inadequate for our purposes, because they are addressed to a less specialized audience.

MARIE WALBERT.

OUR FAILINGS.

Australian Scene, by Hector Dinning. (Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1939. 6s.)

IN *Australian Scene* Mr. Dinning seems to aim at giving Englishmen some idea of Australia, giving Australians some idea of England, and comparing English and Australians in all respects. To my mind this is an impossible task in a book of 225 pages. For one thing, important questions receive a cursory treatment that is bound to offend any person particularly interested in such questions. Mr.

Dinning's remarks on Australian accent, for example, are by phonetic standards inaccurate and in part meaningless; the view that Australian nasality and drawl are symptoms of laziness has long since been discarded, and a statement that Australian speech has *no* rhythm is obviously wrong. Or, to take an example from a less specialized field, surely Mr. Dinning goes beyond the evidence in saying: "Before the War¹ you could get a friendly game of tennis, hockey, cricket, and even football, almost anywhere in this country. But where would you get one now?"

These are the defects of the method. The corresponding virtue is in the number of provocative remarks that Australians could well ponder over. These vary from trenchant comment on the manners of the crowds that follow golf matches, to protests about the ruthless destruction of trees; and from the usual remarks on Australian diet to such unexpected attacks as this on most non-State schools: "The combination of religion and education cannot avoid producing either the emotional cripple or the perfunctorily religious . . ."

I should not care to join the publishers in their claim that this is "a stimulating, thought-provoking book that no Australian should fail to read". Nevertheless, there are few who will read it without profit, and I may add that the conversational tone adopted by the writer makes for pleasant reading.

¹ 1914-18.

H. J. OLIVER.

"ALL FOR YOUR DELIGHT."

A Midsummer Night's Dream, ed. by F. W. Robinson. (The Australian Students' Shakespeare. O.U.P., Melbourne, 1940. 3s. 6d.)

THE Australian Students' Shakespeare, according to the General Preface printed with each volume, is "designed for use in Australasian Secondary Schools and Universities", and Dr. Robinson, editing a play most frequently studied in the earlier years of a Secondary School course, has obviously made every attempt to please the younger student. For example, part one of his Introduction is headed "Chiefly for the Junior Student", some of the problems connected with the play only distantly are left unsolved, and even the explanatory notes are made as bright as possible. But the frequent exclamatory statements pall a little, and the explanation is hardly full enough: surely the Elizabethan meaning of "rude" and "curst", e.g., should be explained to the junior student.

On the whole, this should be a pleasant edition to use in schools; teachers would probably find that the notes needed supplementing a little but that there was little or nothing that had to be explained away. The interesting General Appendix (on the Elizabethan stage) is another merit.

H. J. OLIVER.

THE AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH ASSOCIATION.

Annual Report, 1939.

ONE looks back on 1939 with mixed feelings of satisfaction and disappointment—satisfaction for the things accomplished, embodying as they do a great change in the Association's ambit, the assumption of a more independent attitude and the publication of the first number of the much discussed and long hoped for magazine.

Disappointment is felt in the severing of the direct tie with the Parent Body, and that there is doubt in the minds of some members as to the wisdom of the change is palpable and has been freely expressed—it *may* be reflected in the secession from the Association of 29 members during the year. This loss the Association can ill afford, for the success of its endeavours now, more than ever, can only be assured by a full and increasing membership.

It will be unfortunate if those endeavours should be submerged by the tide of unrest that threatens to overwhelm so many institutions, particularly those such as ours, which are of a purely cultural nature. The Parent Body has decided that for the present, at any rate, its work must go on; if that is to be the determination of our Association, the whole-hearted support of its members will be necessary and an energy, the lack of which, latterly, does not imbue us with hope for the future.

The Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday, 30th March, Mr. Green presiding.

The Annual Report was read and office-bearers for this year were elected. At the conclusion of the formal business an address was given by Dr. Margot Hentze on "The Golden Archipelago".

The Annual Dinner was held in the Withdrawing Room at the University on 16th November. Rev. Dr. Thatcher presided.

The speakers were: Professor A. D. Trendall, who proposed the toast of "The Association", and Dr. Margot Hentze, who replied. "Australian Literature" was proposed by Dr. Moll and the reply was by Mr. Dal Stivens.

The following addresses were given during the year:

May 1st.—Mr. A. P. Treweek: "Translation of the Classics."

May 22nd.—Miss Helen Heney: "The Background of Joseph Conrad."

June.—Dr. R. B. Farrell: "Thomas Mann."

July.—Mr. A. D. Hope: "The Use and Abuse of Biography in Criticism."

August.—Dr. Ian Henning: "Jean Giraudoux."

September.—Mr. G. F. James: "Anglo-Dutch Literary Relations at the End of the Seventeenth Century."

October.—Mr. L. M. Murchison: "Shakespeare's Cymbeline." Miss Jessie Kershaw: "Somerset Maugham as a Novelist."

The members whose subscriptions embraced the English publications received three copies of *English* and the Presidential Address, "The Genius of English Poetry", by Dr. William Temple, Archbishop of York.

Once again the Association owes a great deal to Mr. Howarth for the amount of work he so willingly undertook in the editing of *Southerly* and in its preparation for the press, work in which he was ably seconded by Mr. Oliver.

The cordial thanks of the Association are also due to Mr. A. E. Saxton, who, in an honorary capacity, for so many years audited its accounts and prepared the Annual Balance Sheet.

Mr. Saxton, having been appointed to the management of a large city business, finds it impossible to continue his work for the Association, and this year's Balance Sheet was prepared, at very short notice, by Mr. T. Williams, one of our former treasurers, to whom we wish to express our deepest appreciation and thanks.

[In adopting the Report the meeting expressed its appreciation of Mr. Butterley's services. Mr. Green, however, regretted the pessimistic tone of the Report. He pointed out that there had not been a complete severance from the Parent Body, since a part of members' subscriptions was still being sent to England in return for the Annual Report. The new magazine, *Southerly*, whose establishment was possible only by the discontinuance of *English*, the magazine of the Parent Body, was gaining support and promised to become a most valuable part of the activities of the Association. The Association had unfortunately lost some valued members, but new members were coming forward. Altogether, he thought there was good reason for hopefulness.

A.G.M.]

AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH ASSOCIATION.

Notes.

A VERY cordial welcome was given to the first number of *Southerly* by *Notes and Queries* for January 6. After reference to the editorial, the writer says: "The various pressures of the times everywhere being what they are, we can easily believe that literary gifts tend grievously to be stifled, and congratulate Mr. Howarth and his supporters on this spirited attempt to give them at any rate some fair place for showing themselves.

"Two features may strike the reader in this first number; the lavish space given to verse, and the frequency of the whimsical and the reflective in the essays. The reviews are carefully weighed and interesting. Perhaps more arresting topics may be found for coming issues. . . . To our own readers the most valuable article will

probably be Mr. H. M. Green's 'Australian Literature, 1938'; we are glad to notice that an article on the past year's publications is to appear annually in the magazine."

The address on "The Pronunciation of English in Australia" delivered to the Association by Dr. A. G. Mitchell on April 1 has now been issued as a pamphlet, and is obtainable from the Hon. Secretary, or from Mr. R. G. Howarth at the University. The price is 1s. 6d. (postage 1d.).

Copies of Numbers One and Two of *Southerly* are still available, and may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, or from Dr. Mitchell at the University. The price is 1s. 6d. (postage 1d.). Members can help the magazine by purchasing extra copies to send to their friends.

Other publications of the Association in stock are:

LEAFLETS (one shilling each).

- No. 7. "Some Elizabethan Dramatic Manuscripts." R. C. Bald.
- No. 8. "William Lisle Bowles." A. J. A. Waldock.
- No. 12. "Richard II." J. le Gay Brereton (7 copies).
- No. 13. "The Poetry of W. B. Yeats." H. M. Green.
- No. 14. "George Crabbe." F. G. Phillips.
- No. 15. "Scott's Equipment in Attainments and Character for his Literary Work." Sir Mungo MacCallum.
- No. 17. "A Midsummer Night's Dream." H. M. Green.
- No. 19. "Macbeth." A. J. A. Waldock.

PAMPHLETS (one shilling and sixpence each).

- No. 1. "The Tempest." R. G. Howarth.
- No. 2. "The Pronunciation of English in Australia." A. G. Mitchell.

OFFPRINTS (threepence each).

- No. 2. "Not Understood." Dorothea Mackellar.
- No. 3. "Ulysses." John Anderson.
- No. 4. "Transition Periods in English Poetry." Lance Fallaw.
- No. 8. "Neil Munro." A. H. Charteris.
- No. 9. "Modern English Poetry." Kenneth Slessor.
- No. 10. "Unpublished Plays." Carrie Tennant.
- No. 12. "The Poetry of Wilfred Owen." H. M. Storey.
- No. 14. Tenth Annual Dinner: Addresses.
- No. 15. "Virginia Woolf." Margot Hentze.
- No. 17. "The Old English Poet and his Craft." A. G. Mitchell.
- No. 18. "Modern American Poetry." T. Inglis Moore.
- No. 19. "Dorothy Osborne's Letters." R. M. Crawford.

- No. 20. "Australian Literature Society Medallists." Flora Eldershaw.
 No. 23. "The English Drama: Is it Dead or Dying?" Leslie Rees.
 No. 24. "The Modern Comedy of Manners." J. G. Flynn.
 No. 25. "The Later Wordsworth." T. D. Anderson.
 No. 28. "The Playhouse and the Play." W. G. B. Cassidy.
 No. 29. "Furphy, War Historian." C. E. W. Bean.

Copies of these may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary.
 Postage should be added for each order.

SIMPLICITY.

He told me secrets
 Of the outer moons,
 The hidden stars:
 He showed me things—
 Strange things in tubes and jars,
 And how Life came
 From sedge and puffed cocoons;
 Patterns on stones,
 And tabulated bones
 Of long industrious names;
 Made and unmade
 Crystals (without God's aid).

After a parched while
 I cried, "Be done
 With star and sun,
 With stone and bone."
 And I cried, "Begone
 With crystal and with moon,
 With labouring cocoon,
 So may I
 Rise, and run, and get
 The breath, the eye,
 The morning dye
 Of one uncomprehended violet."

"E."

AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH ASSOCIATION.
Income and Expenditure Account for the year Ended 31st December, 1939.

1939.		f	s.	d.	f	s.	d.
Dec. 31							
To Proportion of subscriptions due to the English Association, London:							
83 Ordinary Members at 1/-	4	3	0				
10 Ordinary Members at 3/-	1	10	0				
				5	13	0	
" Printing and Stationery—General				5	5	11	
" Postages and Petty Cash .. .				10	13	4	
" Hire of Meeting Room .. .				6	15	0	
" Exchange and Bank Charges ..				2	15	8	
" Miscellaneous Expenses—							
Annual Dinner .. .	12	1	5				
Publications—							
Southerly ..	£32	16	6				
"Macbeth" ..	12	11	8				
Recorder ..	3	14	6				
	49	2	8				
				61	4	1	
By Membership Subscriptions—							
9 Ordinary Members at 13/6 ..	6	1	6				
1 Ordinary Member at 13/- ..	0	13	0				
68 Ordinary Members at 10/6 ..	35	14	0				
5 Ordinary Members at 10/- ..	2	10	0				
				44	18	6	
Miscellaneous Receipts—							
Annual Dinner .. .	8	10	9				
Publications—							
Southerly ..	£6	9	6				
"Macbeth" ..	9	17	6				
"Hamlet" ..	5	2	0				
Unnamed ..	1	12	0				
	23	1	0				
Donations .. .	7	8	0				
				38	19	9	
Interest received .. .				1	11	7	
Excess of expenditure over income debited as under—							
Accumulation Account ..	1	15	2				
Life Members' Subscriptions Reserve Account .. .	5	2	0				
				6	17	2	
				£92	7	0	

SOUTHERLY

VOLUME ONE, NUMBER FOUR.

NOVEMBER, 1940.

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EDITORIAL.

THE appearance of this fourth number of *Southerly*, though slightly delayed, may be said to mark the establishment of the magazine as a regular feature of Australian literary life. Not many periodicals of this kind survive beyond the first few numbers, and it was to be expected that ours, in turn, would have its difficulties. Thanks, however, to the generosity of those who responded to the Association's appeal for financial support, *Southerly* now not only exceeds its first year of existence, but also has a reasonable chance of continuing for the future, even in spite of the increasing severity of the war.

The Editors still aim to carry out the original intention of providing four numbers a year; to make *Southerly* in fact what it is stated to be: a quarterly magazine. If this is to be done (and the approval of all interested would surely be given) means must be found to do it. Obviously, a general subscription of 10s. 6d. a year cannot cover the publication of four numbers of a magazine plus one pamphlet, and the price of a dozen or more copies of the *University Union Recorder* containing reports of meetings and addresses, as well as the rent of meeting-rooms and the general expenses of executive work. Sales of this and other publications, with advertisements, help, but are far from being sufficient. It has therefore been proposed, as one measure, to raise the subscription to the Association. Since, however, this could be done only by general consent, the Committee would be glad to learn members' views on the matter. Another plan is that some issues of *Southerly* should not be distributed free to members but should be charged for, at the usual price to the public. A further idea is to obtain support from other literary bodies, or even from a Government source. Criticism of these schemes, or alternative suggestions, would be welcomed; and, indeed, any means for ensuring the full life of *Southerly* should be given careful consideration. It need hardly be said that, in the meantime, further donations towards the costs of printing would be appreciated.

Already the magazine may claim to have performed a valuable function in giving opportunity for many of the younger writers to make their work and their names more widely known, while at the same time providing literary pleasure for readers. The Editors are pleased and proud to include what older and more established authors may care to contribute, but one of their own main duties, as they conceive them, is to give every assistance to developing literary talent; and the hope may be expressed that, years hence, many names which appeared first in the pages of *Southerly* will be found famous in our literature. Indeed, it may be said that, if no other reason can be advanced, the provision of scope for the pens of newer writers warrants the existence and maintenance of *Southerly*.

The delay in the issue of this number mentioned in the first paragraph above has been due to the uncertainty of our financial position, and also to the necessity of obtaining permission from the Department of Customs to continue publication. Like all other periodicals, *Southerly* now comes under the paper-rationing regulations, and we must dutifully accept whatever allowance of paper is made us in the future. Should the size of the magazine be perforce reduced, the size of the type, in some sections, must be reduced, too, in order to ensure that the amount of material included shall be the same as usual, for we believe that a magazine should contain "good store". Readers are asked to give all the co-operation they can, and even, if it is required, to grant their indulgence. They may be assured that, however *Southerly* change its form, its spirit will remain unquenched.

It rests to thank those members whose names are mentioned on page 42, for their readiness and kindness in making it possible, by their donations, to issue this number. No greater encouragement to the Editors to persevere in the fulfilment of their task could have been given, and they make their acknowledgments with gratitude.

HELEN SIMPSON.

By H. M. GREEN.

HELEN SIMPSON, who died in England the other day at no more than forty-two, was one of the most interesting of Australia's literary expatriates. "Henry Handel Richardson", W. J. Turner, Christina Stead, Velia Ercole, the young Lindsays, and, long before them, Gilbert Murray, Alexander the philosopher, "George Egerton", Mrs. Humphrey Ward: these are some of the most notable of the writers who—or in some cases it was their parents—have felt the centripetal impulse of empire and civilization, so that the centre of the empire has been enriched at the expense of its outskirts, as happened so often in the later days of Rome. Why not? The reverse process has given Australia writers who until lately were regarded as her best, and a sudden change in climate and surroundings has often brought about a literary development that would have been unlikely otherwise.

It was in 1914, as a girl of sixteen, that Helen Simpson left Australia. Like Henry Handel Richardson, she had meant to be a professional musician, but war came down and she went to Oxford instead, where she took a degree in music and studied modern languages as a preparation for war work. Then she joined the W.R.E.N.S. and became a decoding officer. She also wrote, and it is said that her first book, *Acquittal*, was finished in five weeks for a bet. That was after she had declared that most modern novels were "written in six weeks by half-wits or persons under the influence of drink". She despised *Acquittal*, but it is a good enough book of its kind. She made friends with Clemence Dane, with whom she wrote several books, including a couple of detective novels, and Dorothy Sayers, whom she helped in compiling the delightful *Wimsey Papers*, but all that need concern us here is her Australian books; that is, since she lived outside Australia, those of her books which have Australian subjects. She married

Dr. Denis Browne, himself a nephew of "Rolf Boldrewood" and educated at The King's School, and has an eleven-year-old daughter.

Helen Simpson was a person of brilliant all-round ability: apart from being musician, biographer, playwright, novelist, she read four languages besides her own, was an expert on cookery and domestic science generally, a fine fencer (like Dorothea Mackellar), a fine horsewoman, and—an authority on witchcraft and demonology! And, as some of us out here know from personal experience, she was an excellent after-dinner speaker and lecturer, direct or over the air, and a charming woman as well, with a lovely deep contralto speaking voice that constituted part of her charm.

Brilliance, and an immense vitality: these are, as might have been expected, the outstanding characteristics of Helen Simpson as a novelist. And one is not surprised to find along with these an extraordinary fertility and richness of imagination. On the strength of these characteristics, of her unfailing high spirits, her luxuriance of incident and colour, and her accomplished style, which combines wit, clarity, surprise and a kind of attractive effrontery, she has been called one of Australia's greatest writers—how many "great" writers have we?—has been placed in the front rank of living novelists, and has even been ranked with Henry Handel Richardson. That sort of thing is absurd, and no one would have laughed at it more spontaneously than Helen Simpson herself, for she was a modest woman. As a novelist she is inferior not only to H.H.R., but to at least one other Australian, Katharine Susannah Prichard, and, if we include in the comparison other writers who have settled overseas, she can hardly be said to have more literary ability than Christina Stead. Yet she is probably read more widely than any of these; and no wonder, for she is a most entertaining writer, and if when we are thinking of literary quality we concentrate on style, then none of these can touch her. But the fact is that her literary qualities, striking as they are, are after all more or less superficial qualities, and her books, delightful as they are, are superficial books, which never approach the core of

reality. Speaking generally, for of course parts of them are exceptions, it is fantasy they deal with, not life.

In the case of *The Woman on the Beast* this goes without saying. In the case of *Boomerang* it is fairly obvious, and when, in *Under Capricorn*, she comes nearest to attempting a novel of real life, though she herself calls it "a highly-coloured, improbable, and yet simple story", it is not only unconvincing but, considering the quality of her other work, surprisingly thin. One can no more believe in it than in her richer and more deliberately fanciful fabrications. *Boomerang*, in which she says she first found herself, is a fascinating book—or rather series of books. For it is not a story but a number of incongruous stories fastened together with an ingenuity which is nevertheless transparent and ineffective; or rather, with a kind of careless ingenuity; for the question of organic unity doesn't seem to trouble her at all. *Boomerang* is a panorama of adventures in three continents, which owes something in style to Norman Douglas and in atmosphere and layout, since one can hardly call it construction, to *Orlando* and *A High Wind in Jamaica*. One cannot put it down, and yet one cannot accept more than a few pages here and there as representing anything that might actually have happened. Of its various incidents, "some of the more improbable", says its author in her preface, "are true". This of course, as she would have been the first to admit, is no excuse; but as a matter of fact it is not merely the "steepness" of one or another incident or group of incidents that causes the discriminating reader to accept the book (with gratitude) rather as a fairy story than—may I use an out-of-date expression by a quite out-of-date critic?—as a criticism of life, but that the atmosphere generally is that of a sometimes rather theatrical fantasy, always diverting, sometimes delicious, but hardly part of the world in which we live, and our ancestors have lived.

Now we come to what is, I think, the best of Helen Simpson's fantasies, *The Woman on the Beast*, and by this I mean in particular the last part of the book, a story of Australia in the last year of the current century, when all the other countries in the world have submitted to the spiritual

and material dominance of a woman Anti-Christ, a kind of compound of Mary Baker Eddy and Aimee Semple McPherson, Emma Jane Sopwith, who calls herself the eldest daughter of God. How Australia, now inhabited by a nomadic population of no more than a million, who, suspicious of Mrs. Sopwith's missionaries, hide underground, shift cities in a night by 'plane and hold surreptitious race meetings on racecourses hidden in the bush, are divided into two warring factions, green and orange; how this far off and barren country has been hitherto neglected as hardly worth bothering about; how a young woman, sent out from England to spy on the Australians, is won over by their easy humorous careless freedom, and by something in the country's atmosphere; and how finally Mrs. Sopwith, using a quite Hitlerian subterfuge, liquidates the whole population at its united annual festival at opposite ends of the ruins of Sydney Harbour Bridge: all this is told in a manner so vivacious, though never for more than an instant as credible as H. G. Wells, for instance, makes *The First Men in the Moon*, that one can almost forgive an enthusiastic reviewer for declaring it "one of the finest quasi-historical stories in the language"!

Helen Simpson has been called, among other things, un-Australian, but this is not quite correct. In her preference for the invention of highly coloured action and incident to the patient development of character, in her lack of organic construction, and (to quote an acute and discriminating review by Tom Moore in the *Herald* some time ago) in her "liking for easy contacts and immediate effects", she is in the track of an old Australian tradition, which is however being departed from to-day. Where she is un-Australian is in her brightness and lack of realism. Let us end with one or two of her glances at what she seems to have considered typical of this country and its people. The first is from *The Woman on the Beast*:

Jane, with nine others, stepped from the air machine a fortnight later on to Australian soil, in cloudless, stupefying weather. The distances were dancing; everything else, trees, waves, and birds, was altogether still with heat. From the pepper-trees came a croaking of locusts, whose carapaces, sloughed and gaping, clung beside the living

creatures on the boughs. The grass was burnt yellow; there were no visible flowers; but walking as the adventurers soon did into a grove of thin trees, sharp delicious scents came up from plants they trod underfoot.

This is good; a breath of the real thing. But in *Boomerang* she speaks of the Australians as

a cold-blooded race under the tropic's burning glass, self-conscious, distrustful of beauty, gamblers and the world's most unsatisfactory of lovers.

This last is interesting in view of the opinion expressed by an English reviewer of K. S. Prichard's *Intimate Strangers*, that there seemed to be too much lovemaking in Australia. Does it mean merely that Helen Simpson disagrees with the English reviewer, or that she considers Australians unsatisfactory as lovers because they have grown blasé through continual practice?

SIX O'CLOCK IN THE QUADRANGLE.

Time is among these crumbling peaks,
and darkly he can tangle
the whiter moon among his hair. . .
The bell unweary creaks,
and the young girl in the quadrangle
is taut and twanging as despair:
time is the sea in her mind's shell,
night is the smoke in her heart's cell;
the bell, six hornets hold the land,
stinging her hope, and the sun's gold
on the ivy's hollow hand,
a hand on stone as cold.

Ah, it is of no avail
to ruffle her still brow
with winds, or with the pale
cloister lights make beauty now.

T.R.

SHEAR BLADES.

By DAL STIVENS.

I.

THERE had been a drought for over a year. The kangaroos had eaten all the grass in the hills. Trees were dying, yellowing at the tips. Waterholes were drying. Shortage of food and water drove the kangaroos down from the hills. Every evening they used to come to water at the dam. In one place they had broken down the fence. The fence was made of rails and dead bushes and all the kangaroos used to leap over the gap that they had made.

One evening an old man kangaroo came down to water. He was red in colour. He stood six feet high. Where his long tail joined his body it was nearly as thick as a man's thigh. His claws were worn and broken from scratching out dead roots of grass. His ears were torn. His hide was dusty. In places there was a scaling skin disease.

When he came to the half-broken-down fence he began to move more quickly, clearing twenty feet in a leap. Eight feet from the fence he took off, thrusting powerfully at the ground. He cleared the gap by three feet. Old shear blades had been set in the ground. When he landed one of them like a knife through the tight parchment of a drum cut through the tendons of the right shank. The muscles snapped. They bunched up like severed elastic. The kangaroo tried to bound away, but only one leg was sound. He came down on his maimed leg.

Afterwards he struggled, but he had only moved a few yards away when the farmer found him two days later. The farmer killed him and five other maimed kangaroos with a stick.

II.

Lack of water drove the brumbies down from the hills. A mob of fifty used to water at the dam. They broke down fences and destroyed the new wheat crop. In the end the farmer and his sons drove them into a yard.

One morning only a colt and his mother were left in the yard. All the other brumbies had been driven out of the yard with stock-whips. The colt was three days old. He moved about on long brittle legs. His hooves looked as

though they had been polished with wax. His head was hammer-shaped. He was nudging at his mother's udder. His nose was soft as cobwebs. He had a diamond blaze on his nose. His mother was taller than he; she, also, was a bay. She was small and scrubby. Her muscles were firm like steel. The mare and colt were of no use as stock horses.

Presently a man came and cracked a whip. The mare quivered. The colt came in close to her side. Then the whip stung her on the flank. She sprang forward. The whip flayed her sides. It urged her ahead. It guided her towards the race. She galloped into the race and the colt followed. The whip cracked behind. She saw the bush ahead and plunged forward, whinnying. As she came out into the open the man made ready. He held a shear blade bound on a long stick. He plunged it into the mare's neck, above the chest. The mare threw up her head and jumped to one side. Then the man plunged the blade into the colt's neck. He reared. The mare whinnied and sprang away and the colt followed. Blood came out on the mare's chest. It came out in jets. A sheet of it ran down her chest and covered her legs. Blood ran out of the colt's chest, also.

They ran a mile up into the hills. Before long the mare began to weaken. Her knees wavered. She whinnied in her distress. Blood bubbled in the wound in her throat. Then she pitched forward. She lay still, but when she heard the colt stumble and fall near her side she tried to lift her head up. She succeeded in raising it a few inches. Then her head fell back heavily as though borne down by a heavy weight.

If they had killed the brumbies in the yard they would have had to burn the bodies.

TRAVAIL.

1.

The simple things make wrath of no account,—
Persistent orchards burgeon in the sun;
With secret wisdom now hot blossoms mount
And in their heart creation is begun;
A dark law keeps the swelling apple round
Or breaks the purple bud
When from dark tunnels of the fatal ground
Surges the nutrient flood.

Courage, not wrath, wakes in the field of pain
 Vast as a desert in the setting sun.
 The red fire leaping in the clouding brain
 While strange alarms about the body run
 Signals no hate to the compassionate heart
 Clamped in birth's anguish grip,
 But quick impulsive tenderness will start
 Under the angry whip.

Our son will live, the fruit be sound
 And the proud flower be gay,
 Men still shall meet on their own ground
 The loveliness of day;
 Boys will walk out in sunnier springs
 And fair girls by their side
 Loving again the simple things
 For which their fathers died.

2.

Surrender the warm body rich with life
 In proudly urgent impulse towards death,—
 A clean, lithe panther, sliding like a knife
 Out of the forest, steel from a drab sheath.
 Move on sure feet with constant high intent
 For worthiness at end,—
 Hard-muscled heroism, nobly sent,
 Wombs' treasure to defend.

The beauty in the mind of men unborn,
 The happiness on uncreated lips
 On this Australian shore, while yet girls mourn
 As they remember the departing ships,
 Will shine, a lovely and enduring tree
 Fruiting in wisdom's hand.
 The Good we lost our wiser sons will see
 Transfigured in this land.

But if that tree should wither
 Or in this orchard plot
 The deadening salt should gather
 Or the dry canker rot;
 If life has not persisted,—
 Then nothing will remain
 But the brave body twisted.
 By distorting pain.

PAUL HASLUCK.

GOING TO KURRAJONG.

By DORA WILCOX MOORE.

THE Painter got to Central early, and, filling his pipe, he waited contentedly for his friend. Temperamentally these two men were alike. Their work absorbed so much of their intelligence that neither had any left over for dealing with such things as keeping appointments. There was, however, one great difference between them. The Poet was a bachelor, the Painter was married. Sometimes the latter wished he wasn't. Often he wondered why he had been chosen by a woman to whom his pictures were little more than coupons representing food and clothing. But today, strolling up and down the platform, he thought of her tenderly. She was, after all, a good creature, and that morning whilst he was eating bacon done to a turn, he thought how right the French were in putting cookery amongst the Fine Arts. This led him on to meditate upon Art in general. It was a pity, he thought, that, especially in Australia, so many people regarded it as being just something to do with pictures. They didn't know that it was so much more—that it touched life at all points. If they did know, and if, in their own particular professions, they felt the same passionate desire for perfection that he felt in his painting, what a different sort of place the world might be! But he didn't feel sure about such things as emptying garbage tins. That must be a beastly job; could one possibly find spiritual satisfaction there? The he remembered that Londoner who had wanted to know why Australians did not speak, like everybody in England, of "dust bins". He must not forget to ask the Poet about it, 'so, pulling out his notebook, he sketched one of these useful receptacles, with his friend's face peering over the top. He had just finished drawing, when his wife said, firmly but amiably, "Dear, if you go now, you'll catch the seven-o'clock at the corner." He had lived longer than she, but he had never learnt that trams go at fixed times. But she knew—how did she know, the wonderful woman? And then, how touching were her last words! "Have a good time, darling, and don't forget to change your socks!"

He did not know that for days past she had been saying to herself, "Thank goodness, he's going to Kurrajong, and I shall be able to spring-clean the studio!"

Then his mind shifted away from home, and wife, and children, and centred itself upon the things that really mattered—problems of form and colour, light and shadow. He did not hear the train come in, and it might have glided away without him, had not his travelling-companion arrived.

The Poet lived in a residential—odious word!—at Manly. The house was built of weatherboard which needed re-painting, and in the backyard the landlady grew begonias in tins. She hadn't wanted to take the Poet as a lodger, for she had heard that all writers were wild, and never paid their debts. Having let him come, she was, illogically, disappointed to find that he paid his rent whenever he could. Her feeling for him became pity for his helplessness, mingled with annoyance that so hefty a man should spend his days scribbling, instead of doing honest work.

It was not her fault that he so nearly missed the train for Kurrajong; nor, indeed, was it his own. For a whole month he had been trying to write a poem. Whether it were good, or not, he could not tell, for it refused to be finished—or even begun. Only the middle part was written, so that it was like a monster with a body, but without head or tail. The night before his journey he had slept badly. Words, which he saw in colour, danced before him, sometimes singly, sometimes in pairs, or even in trios, but never forming a line. There must be something the matter with him, he thought when he awoke. Perhaps his brain had become sterile, and would never put forth an idea again.

And then the amazing thing happened. Whilst he was lathering his chin, a quatrain, Elizabethan in its directness, darted into his head like some bright bird from the dark forest of the sub-conscious. He felt happy; he must be sane after all. But by the time he had finished shaving, it had gone again whence it came, and he could not recall it.

Disaster followed disaster. In the passage, beside his luggage, lay his dog, Boatswain. Some idiot had let him out of the washhouse into which the landlady had locked him

before breakfast, for she, in some dim way, knew that sensitive human beings are instruments which receive the anguish of others. She hadn't wanted the Poet to be upset. And now upset he was, for he felt not only his own pain at leaving the dog, but also the dog's pain at being left. Desperation made him brutal, and all the way up the Corso he was haunted by the remembrance of Boatswain's bewildered eyes. "What have I done?" they seemed to ask. "Why do you treat me so?" It was not surprising that when he reached the ferry, the 'Deewhy' was moving from the wharf. The deckhands evidently expected him to jump on board, but the Poet's heart failed him. If he fell into the sea, he would get wet, and he hadn't another suit to put on. He hesitated—and the 'Deewhy' went on her way without him.

He waited, miserably, for the next boat, his thoughts divided between the quatrain he had lost, and the dog he had deserted. In Australia only people rich enough to have cars could take their dumb friends where they liked; why call such a country democratic? And now Boatswain was breaking his heart at the residential. He would be well cared for, but the Poet knew that he would not be stayed with bones, nor comforted with biscuits, whilst his master was away. A phrase flitted through his mind—"And men shall be as Gods". How silly! he thought. It would be better for mankind to acquire the virtues of dogs—fidelity, and readiness to forgive. Of course, there were dog-fights, but they were not so nasty as the wars of men.

His gloom was not dispelled when he saw the other two-and-a-half passengers in the compartment with himself and the Painter. The woman who sat opposite amidst a litter of parcels, was enormously fat, and he hated fat women. The Poet sniffed, and looked straight ahead. There sat a thin woman with a baby. It was a nice little thing, and gazing over its mother's shoulder, it smiled at him, and said: "Dad-dad." The cup of his bitterness overflowed. Here was the proof of the eternal injustice of things. The world was crying out for babies, and more babies, and he was ready to do his share of the work of fatherhood. But Society, by neglecting

to pay a living wage for his poetry, made it impossible for him to provide for a family; and if he had had the family without maintaining it, that same Society would condemn him. And then—why should the babies of women be allowed in railway-carriages from which the dogs of men were excluded? He thought of writing to *The Sydney Morning Herald* to air his grievances, and to suggest that in future children under three should be required to travel, muzzled, in the guard's van, or in special baby-boxes.

The Painter remained unperturbed. He saw the two women not as human beings, but as designs; the fat one in curves, the thin one in angles. But to him, as to the Poet, the dreary ugliness of the suburbs was depressing. So far as the eye could reach, the land was built over. There were no green hillsides, few open spaces, and many treeless streets. Close at hand they saw backyards, too small for children to play in; broken-down fences; a general slovenliness. In such conditions thousands of their fellow men were living.

The Poet sometimes attained to Pisgah-heights of vision. Then he saw Life stretched out before him in continuity from its dim beginnings to a future veiled in golden mist. He saw it as a whole, with its failures, and achievements, and possibilities. Beneath it lay dark waters, and over it the limitless sky, and the worlds beyond the world. At such times he heard unearthly music, and his own heart began to sing a "Credo—Credo". What he believed he didn't know, for the old faiths were crumbling, but it was in something; and in that something, and there only, his ego found its rightful place, and was at peace.

But today he was not on a mental mountain-top, but shut into a valley, and in his effort to escape, he took the backward path. Looking out over the welter of sordid buildings, he imagined the country as it was before the White Man came. Lizards basked on flat rocks; water trickled drop by drop through beds of fern; boronia and flannel flower blossomed where factories now stood. He wished, suddenly and violently, that Captain Cook had never discovered Australia.

The Painter's trained eyes noted much that the Poet's missed. He admired the lovely vertical lines of a silo, and he

wanted to draw the tall chimneys, belching smoke, which made patterns against the sky. But the artistic poverty of the hoardings near the stations enraged him. He thought that if only he were employed to do this work, he could make such delightful posters that people would fall over one another to buy the corned beef, or toothpaste, advertised by him—even though they wanted neither. Besides, hoardings influenced public taste.

The two friends agreed that the world badly needed financial security, though they didn't know how it could be attained. But of one thing they were sure—financial security was not an end in itself; it was only a beginning. Sufficient money, and sufficient leisure, were not enough to make life full and rich. Some people already had both, but were poverty-stricken where the fine things of the mind were concerned, and knew nothing of the joys that knowledge of literature and architecture can give.

Nor did the world need more creative artists; it was appreciation of their work that was lacking in the masses of men.

It was only when they had left Parramatta that the Painter began to talk. The Poet merely grunted, until he found that the baby and its mother had left the train, and the visible proof of eternal injustice removed.

And now they had got beyond the suburbs, though not yet into the real country. The houses they passed were not crowded together, but they were unbeautiful. Not one seemed to rise naturally and inevitably from the soil; all looked as if a giant in the sky had dropped them anywhere, anyhow, regardless of their surroundings. The friends were glad that the cottage in which they were going to stay at Kurrajong was not like these. They remembered the day when they had seen it first, and how they had stopped the car, and, getting out, had leant over the gate, and looked across the flower garden towards the apple-gum. The little whitewashed house which stood behind it was pleasing to their eyes because it was unpretentious, and fitted into the bush landscape. Then, as in a fairy tale, the door opened, the two old people came out, and down the path to meet them. They were as simple

and as charming as their home, and then and there a friendship began between the workers of the hand and the workers of the brain.

The history of the family was, in little, the history of Australia, and there, amongst these homely people, Poet and Painter found, they believed, a truly Australian culture which was of character rather than of mind.

Left to themselves, the two men began to talk, quietly when the train was not moving, at the tops of their voices when it went on. They agreed that the first work of the next century would be to get rid of the noises invented in the nineteenth and twentieth. That was, of course, said the Painter, if Man were not wiped out by war, in which case his noises would be wiped out too.

Then they began to examine the compartment in which they were sitting. It displeased them. They decided that the whole railway system was out of date. Once the locomotive had been the King of Speed; now people who wanted to get to their destinations quickly, had taken to flying. It was no use making trains go faster; the thing was to make travelling by them more agreeable. The carriages should be cooled in summer, and heated in winter, the Painter thought, and then, being in high spirits, he had a brilliant idea. Why should they not be fitted up with automatic machines, such as he had seen abroad, for the supply of beer? Then the trains would always be so full of passengers that the Department could reduce the price of fares. How was the beer to be got there? Well, he had seen engines pick up water, by means of suction, and he supposed that this method could be applied to any liquid. There might be reservoirs of beer—or of light Australian wine—all along the lines.

The Poet, however, was against this plan. Abstainers had to be considered. Besides, artists would waste all their time in travelling, and in putting their hard-earned pennies in the slots. Besides, these improvements were for the greater comfort of the body, and not for the mind. He thought—and he was sure the Painter would agree with him—that railway-carriage interiors should be more pleasant to look at. Upon the walls, yellow like wattle-blossom, there should hang

poems, beautifully printed, and framed like pictures. They might be illustrated, but it was the poetry that was important. He loved his country, and desired its development in all cultural directions. But only through Poetry and Drama—both neglected in Australia—could the soul of a nation express itself fully.

These rhyme-sheets would have to be changed very often; this would need expert supervision, and he foresaw a time when Poets would be attached, at high salaries, to all railway-staffs. The Painter began at once to make objections. He did not wish to decry Poetry, but it should be kept in its proper place. It reached the understanding better through the ear than through the eye, and should be heard to be appreciated. Railway-carriages offered a splendid scope for mural painting. He would like to see the whole history of Australia, as well as its birds, flowers, fish, and animals, set forth in this way. Then the fame of the beautiful and interesting Australian trains would be blown about the world, and tourists would come in vast hordes to see them. To travel by them would also become part of the education of school children—not caring where they went, nor even whether they ever got anywhere at all.

The two argued for some time about their rival schemes, and at last decided to write them out in full, and submit them to the Prime Minister. They were trying to draft a covering letter, when they were startled by a porter shouting as he rushed past them: "Hi, you blokes, are you going back to Sydney?" They were at Richmond, and the first part of their journey was over.

A very little train, known locally as "Pansy", was waiting at another platform, and the Poet was surprised to see a Manly man talking to the guard. He was the sort of person to live in an ugly expensive house, filled with ugly expensive furniture, where there were no books, and no pictures worth looking at. Because he too broke regulations by taking his dog on the beaches, the Poet knew him. But he was surprised when the large man shook hands with him. "Why!" he boomed, "who'd have thought of meeting you? I'm holiday-making myself—with the wife, of course, and the leetle dawg. Where's

Watcher-call-em? Don't mean to say you've left him behind? Wouldn't have thought it of you." The Poet hung his head, remembering those reproachful eyes. The Painter explained. "Too bad!" the man went on. "I've been in the same fix myself when I hadn't a car. Pity I didn't know. I'd have run the lot of you up, and been pleased to do it for a clever chap like you. I'm not highbrow, but I read your stuff, and I say to the wife: 'I'm proud to know the fellow what wrote that.' Now, see here. I'm off to Manly now. What about picking up Whatcher-call-em, and bringing him up tomorrow? O.K.? Ta-ta." Off he bustled, and the friends took their seats in the little train, the Poet overwhelmed. Only a few hours ago he had felt a lonely atom; now he saw life as a unity. Individuals led separate lives, but were all the same, parts of a whole, and the links that bound them together were many and strange. He felt the exaltation of the mystic, and saw that though the journey had been short, yet it had been full of emotional incident, and his mind had travelled far.

And now "Pansy" was off to Kurrajong. First she ambled down a street just as if it were the usual thing for a train to do. Then she came out on to the riverflats where cattle were browsing on the rich pastures, and the friends craned their necks out of the window to look back at a cypress which rose blue-green against the sky. Their hearts were full of wonder and thankfulness that so lovely a thing should rise from a seed buried in the earth.

On went "Pansy" in her leisurely way, sometimes stopping to hoot at cows straying on the line. They passed through North Richmond, and soon "Pansy" began to climb up into the hills. The country was changing; grass grew round dead ringbarked trees. Looking at these ghosts of their former fresh and living selves, the Painter remembered the battlefields of Belgium, as he had seen them last after the War. He spoke of the brooding silence over the desolate land, and of the mutilated trees which raised their white, broken arms towards Heaven as though imploring vengeance upon Man, the destroyer. The Poet thought that in Australia too, war was being waged against beautiful and helpless things. In Aus-

tralia, too, there were tracts of No Man's Land where the soil, stripped of its trees, was slipping away from the rock. He wondered whether it would make for Peace, in a wider sense, if children were taught to respect Life in all its forms, and never to destroy wantonly flower, or insect, or animal. Killing was necessary, he supposed, but never should it be done without reason. But on the way to Kurrajong the bush still remained, and gradually it closed in on both sides of the railway track. The two men talked no more; they were lost in contemplation. Here was beauty, and cleanliness, and repose. They smelt the perfume of the bush; they felt its healing power. To the Painter, rock and tree and blossoming shrub were, perhaps, exterior to himself, but they were part of the Poet's mind. In him the birds sang; through him the wind blew. He thought it was a marvellous thing to be born in Australia, so vast, so full of variety, circled by the blue sea, and crowned with the stars—but it was not enough. It was necessary to be willing to serve her, and to love all that was Australian. He thought also how high and holy was the mission of the creative artist. It was for him to show to ordinary men and women the realities of the life in which they shared. But again that was not enough. It was necessary to interpret.

What nonsense he had talked about poets being attached to railway-staffs! Neither Poet nor Painter should be attached to anything—they, of all men, should be free—free to praise, and to condemn. Loss of liberty meant the death of Poetry and of Art.

Suddenly, through an opening in the bush, he saw an orchard. The dark-green trees made a pattern against the brown earth, and they were laden with silver blossom and golden fruit—promise, and fulfilment. Here was something alien to Australia, yet already become part of its landscape. The forms of Art that he and the Painter practised were not those of the blackfellow, but they too were firmly rooted, he believed, in the new cultural soil. And the orchards, as well as the bush, belonged now to Australian literature. Had not a Hugh McCrae lain under the lemon, and a Shaw Neilson heard a young girl whisper to the orange-tree?

THE ANNUNCIATION.

Here in my mortal head the immortal mind,
far from the tousled pillow, seems resigned
how like a sad madonna, evermore
to wander her own dream's lonely shore,
draped in a thoughtful gown of heaven's blue
with loosened zone around her chasteness set,
while the dim nimbus to a godhead due
rims with a spinning gleam the filmy net,
and five pearls are in her youthful hair.
Like solitude upon her isle, she stands
and through her fingers lets the running sands
where in the tide her humble feet go bare,
or stoops to lift a shell's pink minaret
and hear the ocean wash its winding stair.
Or as reclining calm beside the source,
one arm in vast oblivious unconcern
leaned on the empty belly of her urn,
neglects the pouring water's wasted course
to contemplate the distance of the dead,
so rapt in coloured symbols will she look
into a gold-illuminated book
for prophecies, but leave the word unread.
When pallid innocence, who by the mane
that veils her little breasts within its skein
may lead her blind old docile unicorn,
his coat of shaggy milk, his spiral horn
and polished hooves of brittle porcelain,
seeks for him fresh auroral pasturage,
those pensive fingers roam the ancient page
and graze the vellum contour of its hill,
the embroidered ribbon at its former mark
replacing, as she turns her solemn eyes
upon the omnipresence of the skies,
where stars have rowed away into the dark
to let their lost wake in silence fill
the infinite glimmering hemisphere with morn.
And there she yearns to yield her maidenhead
of spirit to that pure eternal space,
for in aspiring rapture is her face
wholly translated by its gracious will,
as though the ecstasy of one just dead
embraced the agony of one newborn.

Serene annunciation to my soul:
the silver dawn arises wrapped in chill
presentiments and horizontal light.
His smooth shoulders dominate the whole
eminence of the east with ivory.
His legs' titanic arch supports the white
perfection of the torso, and each limb
is like a column copied in the sea,
and yet this classic stature is so slim,
a wand of lilies could not rival him.
There like the fugitive moon-aureole
with hasty sheen retiring over frost,
a tilted chaplet binds with argent leaves
the lintel of his brow, where carelessly
his aerial unruly locks are tossed,
and holds their errant ringlets in control.
His lucid mantle has aetherial sleeves:
its splendour brightens the maternal deep;
scarcely does his arrival's zephyr keep
flowing afloat the pregnant lettered scroll.
Having alighted on the salty beach,
his wings obediently fold behind,
each chord of feathers crossing over each
devoutly, and his placid palms combined.
Although this reverencing knee is bowed,
its marble foot does not impress the strand,
as now he lays along my shallow sleep
the soft forewarning of his hovered hand,
proffers the laurel branch with lyric rite,
which inspiration whispers, half-aloud.
Then vanishes in archangelic flight
beyond the boundaries of the soundless steep,
while dewy greyness touches flocks of cloud,
scattered like heron's down upon the sky,
with a rose haze, paler below.

And I

awake, and throw the ugly shutters wide
to rest in utter quiet on the sill.
Rarely is flesh from purpose thus untied:
it is as though my aching blood were still.
The tranquil breathing freshness of this hour,
when morning issues from the pod of night,
and trees abruptly into blossom spring
to sanctify some wizened hovel's site,
composes inwardly my feelings' flower,

as when with round mouths the angels sing
cerulean content and clear delight,
while upon serious viols and the lute,
musette and tambour or a fluent flute
saints play antiphonally to the choir
whose wings are psalteries of gilded wire.
Behind the black-toothed silhouette of night,
crooked with chimney-pot and attic roof,
my slender crescent moon still sits aloof
within the cool-domed alcove of the air,
shedding her faintest lustre's influence
of waning ice, forlornly on my sense,
and wanly scans the early azure height,
but finds no sun awake to call her fair,
no lover yet, in whom she might behold
all that the guilty myths have ever told.

H. F. STEWART.

The hanging avalanche of days
fulfils its still and dreadful threat,
overwhelms the valley's sap
and blocks with ice the summer ways.

The figures in the old cartoons—
the armoured wench, the farmer fool—
from darkness tower up again;
fear-distended, mad balloons.

These, my beloved, will break your bones,
black out the morning of your eyes,
blow you into a storm of blood,
darken and dry you on the stones.

Why, in the hours when you and I
drowned in love our old unease,
did no shudder run through me
showing me how you must die?

Why did I not foreknow your hurt,
see your eyes turn blind and red,
and knowing love would be but short
go out to save the useless dead?

J. WRIGHT.

"THE MAD DUCHESS."

By C. J. H. O'BRIEN.

A STRANGER to London might well have wondered at the scene in Hyde Park on May Day, 1667. This favourite resort of the king and court was noisome and foul with dust. A press of vehicles was converging on a large, black coach ornamented with silver and attended by footmen in velvet. Through the white curtains the more fortunate spectators could catch a glimpse of a somewhat faded matron, whose face looked scarcely more wholesome for its numerous black patches and the cluster of ringlets which dangled to her shoulders. Not a spectacle to warrant such a commotion, one would say, even allowing for its singularity. Yet it was this which had brought Mr. Samuel Pepys, Sir William Penn, and a hundred others to the spot. For seldom, indeed, was the famous Duchess of Newcastle to be seen in the capital.

If rank, misfortune, and eccentricity can earn celebrity, it was never better deserved. Her ladyship's family had been driven into exile during the Civil War. She herself, a timid girl of eighteen, had accompanied Queen Henrietta Maria to France; and there, two years later, her diffidence was suitably rewarded by an offer of marriage from the great Duke of Newcastle, recently arrived from Northumberland after the defeat of Marston Moor. For the next decade the Duchess shared her husband's vicissitudes, which ended only with the Restoration, when he retired to his sadly diminished estates. And it was from Welbeck that his wife set forth on her rare excursions to the court which she was never tired of disparaging in her essays and letters. What sort of a figure she cut in London we learn from her contemporaries. Pepys trembled lest her "antick" attire should bring discredit on the Royal Society, for she affected preposterous eccentricities of dress. Evelyn, a sober witness, commented with significant reticence that her appearance was "very singular". The

brilliant and dissipated entourage of Charles II tittered at her extravagant manners and the black cap of original design which nodded over her ringlets. Her arrival in the capital was looked for "as if it were the Queen of Sheba". Nor, if we may believe Mrs. Evelyn, was her behaviour different in the seclusion of Welbeck. "Her mien surpasses the imagination of poets, or the description of a romance heroine's greatness; her gracious bows . . . show what may be expected from her discourse, which is as airy, empty, whimsical, and rambling as her books, aiming at science, difficulties, high notions, terminating commonly in nonsense, oaths, and obscurity." "I was surprised to find so much extravagancy and vanity in any person not confined within four walls", adds the diarist's wife; and, indeed, her ladyship could scarcely complain at having won the title of the "Mad Duchess".

Her claims upon the attention of the world, it will be noted, were not restricted to her quaint exterior and grotesque conversation. A patroness of such famous philosophers as Hobbes and Descartes, the Duchess was also a prolific writer herself; and she appears to have regarded her work with characteristic gravity. At night a bevy of female amanuenses were stationed in her chamber to take down her notions. Her publications included plays, poems, and tales, and even a volume of model speeches ranging from an incitement to mutiny to a loyal address. But the writings by which she set most store were a whole series of philosophical treatises remarkable for their fantastic originality. If the schools did not read her in place of Aristotle, she told Mr. Evelyn, "they did her wrong".

Time, nevertheless, has dealt justly rather than generously with her ladyship's reputation. To-day she is remembered chiefly for one book, the Life of her husband; and, even upon this, opinion has long been divided. Pepys roundly expressed his disapproval. Lamb, on the other hand, was never weary of worshipping at the shrine of "that princely woman, thrice noble Margaret of Newcastle"; and, as for the Life, "No casket is rich enough", he said, "no case sufficiently durable to honour and keep safe such a jewel".

Most readers will agree that this verdict is wide of the mark. True, the merits of the book are not hard to discern. The arrangement of the parts shows a sense of proportion which is completely absent in some other seventeenth-century biography. The style, while rarely free from the faults of redundancy and involved construction, is restrained and temperate. And the portrait of the Duke, as far as it goes, is tolerably vivid. His wife devotedly chronicles his pastimes, sayings, and minutest habits. She is, however, no Boswell nor even an Aubrey. The penetrating felicity of phrase and the instinct for significant detail which illuminate the pages of the "Brief Lives" are not among her gifts. Her admiration for her husband is persistent and indiscriminating. She will not bate one jot of his praise even where it can least be justified. Throughout the *Life* she displays the same inflexible partiality. It is not enough that Newcastle was a successful poet and playwright. She must have him "the best lyric and dramatic poet of this age", in a century which can boast the names of Milton, Herrick, Dryden, and Congreve. She is not content that he was the patron of Descartes and Hobbes. He must also be "a good natural and moral philosopher, not by reading philosophical books, but by his own natural understanding and observation". But more provoking than these monstrous claims is the periodical effervescence of the Duchess's affection. Thus in the prefatory address to her husband she recalls that he was her "only tutor". She also pays tribute to his lordship's "loyal, noble, and heroic actions", a phrase which is constantly repeated with slight variations. The *Life* itself abounds in such encomiums as "My Lord may justly be compared to Titus, the *deliciae* of mankind, by reason of his sweet, gentle, and obliging nature", and again, "His behaviour is such that it might be a pattern for all gentlemen". Recording Newcastle's excellent health, she cannot forbear a fervent entreaty on his behalf, that he "may yet live many years, he being now of the age of seventy-three, which I pray God from my soul to grant him". We are tempted to ask if Pepys is not right after all, if this is not "a mad, conceited, ridiculous woman" and the Duke "an ass to suffer her to write what she writes to him and of him".

A happy impulse, however, led the Duchess to add to the life of her husband a personal memoir, in which she describes her own family, education, and attributes. In length it might pass for an appendix to the main work, yet it is probably the most valuable of all her miscellaneous writings. To some extent her confessions serve to correct the picture handed down by contemporaries such as Pepys and Evelyn and even to explain certain eccentricities of habit and writing. We may be fairly sure, for instance, that not a few of her actions and absurdities had their origin in a morbid diffidence accentuated by her retired upbringing. Prevented from sharing fully in the pursuits and praises of the world, it is not surprising that she should have come to despise these things and to express an extravagant regard for the kinsfolk to whom she looked for appreciation and protection. There is, moreover, ample evidence to show that her devotion could display itself in deeds as well as words. Her account of her appearance before the hostile Parliamentary Committee in an effort to compound for a portion of Newcastle's estates attests her courage and dignity. And when we remember what a bitter trial this must have been to one of her temperament, even Lamb's panegyric seems for the moment justified.

But the most partial critic must admit that it is the Duchess's frailties and foibles which lend the memoir its chief interest. The sheer pleasure of talking of her own thoughts, sorrows, and ambitions is her inspiration. She may protest to the contrary, but we can read it in every line. Her prose is garrulous and frequently confused. She passes from one theme to another, from her family's misfortunes to Newcastle's virtues, from the baseness of the Roundheads to the necessity of discretion in women, with a blithe and feminine inconsequence. The most trifling details of her habits and disposition are recorded with unconscious vanity. Her ladyship has "an indifferent good appetite", yet her diet is for the most part sparing, "as a little boiled chicken or the like", her drink "most commonly water." She is "neither spiteful, envious, nor malicious"; but concerning other qualities she shows a diverting indecision: "Also as I am not covetous, so I am not prodigall, but of the two I am inclining to be prodigall,

yet I cannot say to a vain prodigality." Her literary endowments the Duchess regards with naïve gravity, not unmixed with apprehension. Despite the fecundity of her invention, she fears lest her brain should grow barren; and she shuns violent exertion from similar misgivings: "For should I dance, or run, or walk apace, I should dance my thoughts out of measure, run my fancies out of breath, and tread out the feet of my numbers." More than once we might suppose ourselves not to be reading a memoir two and a half centuries old, but to be listening to an incredible monologue fresh from the lips of the living Duchess, miraculously preserved for posterity. We, too, have been invited down to Welbeck to be entertained with a discourse which is nothing if not whimsical and rambling. Yet the egoism is so spontaneous and unashamed that we can afford to laugh indulgently. Unlike Mrs. Evelyn, we may be charitable and let this strange, capricious creature speak her apologia. "I repine not at the gifts that Nature, or Fortune bestows upon others, yet I am a great emulator; for though I wish none worse than they are, yet it is lawful for me to wish myself the best, and to do my honest endeavours thereunto; for I think it no crime to wish myself the exactest of Nature's works, my thread of life the longest, my chain of destinie the strongest, my mind the peaceablest; my life the pleasantest, my death the easiest, and the greatest saint in Heaven." Few of these wishes were fulfilled in the Duchess's brief lifetime. Let us hope the last has not been forgotten.

THE PEAR TREE.

"What be you a-lookin at, Emily Ann,

Starin with your eyes all set?"

"I been a-seein a ghost, Amanda,

And I be a-seein it yet."

"Where was it you seen it, Emily Ann?"

"It was hung on the big pear tree . . .

I seen the ghost, Amanda,

And the ghost it said it was me.

"Put your hand on my heart, Amanda,

Feel of the life of it there;

For the ghost was hung on the pear tree,

It had my eyes and my hair."

MARY GILMORE.

BROUGHT TO BOOK.

NEW POETRY.

Memory of Hills, by Rex Ingamells. (F. W. Preece, Ltd., Adelaide, 1940.)

Cut from Mulga, by Ernest G. Moll. (Melbourne University Press, 1940. 4s. 6d.)

Elegy for an Airman, by Douglas Stewart. (Frank C. Johnson, Sydney, 1940. 2s.)

Granaries of Time, by John Christopher. (Frank Johnson, Sydney, 1940. 3s. 6d.)

WHEREAS most of our local writers have of late protested against the gum-tree tradition, the Jindyworobak Club, of which Rex Ingamells is a member, is fostering a new movement towards nationalism in Australian literature. Much may be said for both points of view, and if the one side can point to Brennan, the other can cite Lawson to support its case. To be sure, the poetaster self-consciously parading as a patriot is a distressing spectacle; but in his collection of poems entitled *Memory of Hills*, Mr. Ingamells writes with unmistakable sincerity. His purpose is stated in the opening piece:

I have hard faith to keep in midst of sham
because suburban tritenesses would damn
the human spirit, and defeatist breath
falls under load of bitter pang
in cramped backyards of memory-death
where moon-pale mists of washing hang.

Bush and desert provide the setting for most of his poems, some of which are slight, but none commonplace. He several times contrasts city and country, to the advantage, of course, of the latter; thus in "Cross-Section" the triviality of the city-dwellers' pursuits is emphasised by contrast with the black duck and the crows, symbols of "nature's unconcern". The aborigines provide the subjects of other poems: in "Maiden Form", for instance, he gives us a graceful picture of a little native girl, and in "From a Dying People" he speaks with dignity and restrained defiance for an unfortunate race.

Notwithstanding his rejection of European traditions, Mr. Ingamells is no bush-balladist, but a careful craftsman with a fine command of cadence, not scorning to use conventional metres where they suit his purpose, but able to handle more irregular and flexible rhythms as well. He has, too, a gift for picturesque description, as of the hills with

their reflex of moonlight, their kind
wrinkled acknowledgment of the moon's clarity.

The opening stanza of "From a Dying People" provides another example:

The sun shall wound with flickering fang
 night-weary ridge and shadowy plain
 and send the blood of evening down
 the western gorges time again.

Many of the poems in Professor Moll's volume, *Cut from Mulga*, are also distinctively Australian in subject, but he does not give such an authentic interpretation as Mr. Ingamells of the spirit of his native land. His approach is more conventional, his feeling less intense; the difference may be seen by comparing "The Bush Speaks", in which the tripping trochaic rhythm seems peculiarly inappropriate to the subject, with Mr. Ingamells' "Nature's Manifesto".

This is not to deny, however, the success with which Professor Moll in several of his poems describes characteristic scenes from Australian life. One of the most striking is "Eagles Over the Lambing Paddock", in which he tells how the disgust inspired in him by the lambing ewes vanishes at sight of

the wedge-tailed eagle wheeling
 In skies as biting blue as ocean spaces,
 Great wing above the messy commonplaces
 Of birth and death and the weak sprawl of feeling.

A yearning for the peace and simplicity of country life recurs; whereas Mr. Ingamells writes of a flinty and relentless land, in which human beings seem intruders, Professor Moll emphasises the close relationship between man and nature. Sometimes, indeed, in the more colloquially-phrased poems, a trace of sentimentality appears.

Cut from Mulga, however, covers a far wider range of subjects than *Memory of Hills*, and some of the best poems therein are not essentially Australian in background, but are the product of the poet's introspection or of his reading. An example of the latter is "On Reading a War Poet with a Class", one of the several sonnets in which he shows skill in handling a difficult form. The sestet is noteworthy for its modulated music and the fine contrast it contains:

Remember, too, he fell on that same day,
 Eyes wild with fear; a bullet in his breast;
 And his last sunset, yellow in the west,
 Saw, as the hot gun-fury cooled away,
 Only a corpse with blood upon its mouth
 And a few swallows, high and heading south.

The best of the subjective poems is "On Cutting a Christmas Tree", which is rather reminiscent of seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry. Beginning with the reflection that acts cannot be "kept strictly celibate", that

I must

Admit the copulation
 Of all past things within my helpless dust,

the poet goes on to illustrate this by the conceit that the tree he has cut resembles a child shrinking from a blow.

Contrasting with the simplicity and directness of these poems, Douglas Stewart's volume *Elegy for an Airman* demands unremitting attention from the reader, for his diction is compressed and metaphorical, and his transitions abrupt in the modern manner. The poem which gives its title to the collection is interesting if only for the poet's handling of his theme; in lamenting the death of the friend who

chose the brilliance of flight to complete the pattern
Of speed and light he had learned from our mountain streams,
he speaks mainly of their boyhood together in New Zealand rather than of the airman's exploits, and the world of youthful imagination of which he gives us a glimpse is uncommonly real and attractive. The chief weakness lies in the rhythm, which perhaps was intended to sound mournful, but becomes monotonous.

One of Mr. Stewart's chief poetic gifts is his original and dynamic use of language, his ability to create striking visual images; however, he is not content to present a vivid scene, but must always give it some subjective meaning. Thus in "The Fisherman" he declares:

Old scarecrow among your silver meadow of foam,
No more than Canute can you defy the sea's
White melancholy birds or the rushing dark,

and then, with a sudden change of attitude, calls on the fisherman to stand

For the men who stood like rock in the dark of history,
For the men who will stand like rock in the dark of the future.

Here, as also in "The Pine Trees" and "The Lake", the method is effective, but in some poems the application is so personal that the significance remains obscure.

Characteristic of Mr. Stewart's unorthodox use of words is his trick of fusing different sense-impressions: thus he speaks of a "blue holy clamor" and of "music ringing black". He also experiments with assonance in place of rhyme, as a stanza from "Burnt Offering" indicates

With a harsh sound like surf
The cattle cropped the grass.
And it was not so safe
When white the midnight was
But from the hedge, the grove
And ploughland's black lagoon
Something like ghost from grave
Rose up to the full moon.

John Christopher's volume *Granaries of Time* seems to be the product of a desire to write verse rather than of any true poetic compulsion. The material of these poems is commonplace, and the expression matches it, despite Mr. Christopher's obvious striving for certain verbal effects. The principal theme is the passing of time, but he has nothing new to say on this familiar subject. The longish poem "Reverie" invites comparison with "Elegy for an Airman", since it

too looks back to childhood; but, whereas Mr. Stewart employs a series of brief, vivid scenes, "Reverie", true to its title, meanders along without leaving any lasting impression on the reader's mind. So, too, the conclusion of "Lines to My Love" seems extremely weak:

Rich voice whose sweetness thrills
As music at night!
Its vibrant music fills
My soul with delight!

Mr. Christopher essays various traditional metrical forms, including the villanelle and triolet, his favourite being the sonnet; but notwithstanding this interest in the technique of verse-making, his ear betrays him at times, so that the rhythm of several lines is hard to justify.

Granaries of Time contributes nothing new or memorable to Australian verse, but the other three volumes reviewed at least stimulate interest in the course which our poetry is to take in the future.

THELMA HERRING.

"PLUS ÇA CHANGE . . ."

Hermes, the Magazine of the Undergraduates, University of Sydney. Trinity Term, 1940.

THE latest issue of *Hermes* does nothing to impair the tradition of undergraduate omniscience and intellectual exuberance. The fine thread of editorial modesty, too, continues to be spun, if, at least, we may identify the Donald Horne who reviews *Southerly* with the D. R. Horne who is announced as Sub-Editor. "For the last ten years", he writes, "as its Editors have continued to point out, *Hermes* has avoided standardization, the pleas of the 'local barnyard', and any hint of literary smugness. Its Editors have been brave and their virtue is rewarded in the *Hermes* files." He goes on to indicate that if the editors of *Southerly* will follow the advice he gratuitously tenders, their magazine also may not "disappear from the shelves of the critical". One recalls that a former Editor produced a number wholly in free verse; and one remembers down the years recurring charges that *Hermes*, so far from being representative of the undergraduate body, tends to become the monopoly of a minority clique (see *The Jubilee Book of the Law School*, 1940, at p. 94). There is some ground for the latter accusation even in the present number. Only five brave souls avoid anonymity, including the Editor and Sub-Editor, and there is reasonable evidence for believing that most of these five veil the number of their contributions under pseudonyms.

A few minor criticisms upon the production may be made first. Although the title-page identifies *Hermes* as the Magazine of the Undergraduates, University of Sydney, there is no such identification

with the University upon the cover. Again, there is no pagination, an ancient but useful device for quick and accurate reference that may be commended to the Editors. Next, the printing of French quotations without the appropriate accents is disconcerting to a reader, especially of poetry. Lastly, the issue as a whole shows careless editing. Punctuation, for example, is very bad, and faulty punctuation may provide a bar to understanding. The number of literal errors, too, is excessive: there are at least seven in *Manners or Sense?*, which is presumably by the Editor. All of these are minor points, but accuracy and thoroughness in the technique of editing should always be goals of editorial achievement.

There is an artless preoccupation with the logical syllogism and near-syllogism in no fewer than four out of the six prose articles of the issue. "D.H." in *Australian English* refers to "my smattering of logic", and reduces an argument to a syllogism. "Aristaeus" in *In Honour of Chris. Brennan* urges certain critics to "take a course in elementary logic", and likewise propounds a syllogism. R. Dunlop in *Manners or Sense?* sets forth the third, and "Aristaeus" in *On the Passing of Sir John* goes one better with enthymemes. Surely there is something more than mere coincidence in this little bit of intellectual Exhibitionism? Some evidence, not merely of identity, but of a dominant influence?

There are two short stories, *The Matrimonial Misadventures of Mr. MacGregor* by "Khaemuas" and *Cave!* by "Oneiros". The former, besides being in questionable taste, has that touch of salacity which some University people think is essential to any literary exertion by undergraduates. The second, a subterranean nightmare, is much better written, in a style akin to that of Stevenson, though the ending is flat and unsatisfactory unless one takes in with the text the pseudonym of the author.

Of the prose articles, including reviews, Mr. Hibberd's study of the French Symbolists Rimbaud and Verlaine is outstanding: a good, short, critical estimate of a little understood movement, that suffers, however, from the absence of accent markings already noted, and a number of literals. In *Manners or Sense?*, Mr. Dunlop attempts a critical study of tragedy and a comparison of the Aristotelian and Nietzschean conceptions, with a graft of psycho-analysis to bring the matter up to date. The attempt is marred by an imperfect understanding of the catharsis wrought by pity and fear in the Aristotelian view of tragedy as interpreted by Lessing. "D.H." opens the syllogistic parade with his review of Dr. Mitchell's work on Australian pronunciation. The review generally is reasonable and favourable, but weakened by meaty slang and journalistic clichés like "spruiked" and "idealist flummery". The correct spelling of "diphthong" and "triphthong", too, is expected in a University publication. *On the Passing of Sir John*, by "Aristaeus", adds little but smiles to our

critical notions of the leviathan merrymaker, Falstaff, and the exegesis is mistily vague. "Aristaeus" again is responsible for *In Honour of Chris. Brennan*, a review of Mr. Randolph Hughes's blustering review of Mr. Green's critical work on the Australian poet. He does not declare or traverse the critical issues in the unfortunate encounter and digresses into irrelevance. But his warmth in attacking Mr. Green's detractor is commendable. Something has already been said of Mr. Horne's patronising review of *Southerly* and his modest encomiums upon the editorial giants of *Hermes*, but it should be added that his strictures on "Mr. Allen's" contribution become amusing to anyone who knows the competence, literary and intellectual, of the scholarly Doctor. The rest of the criticism is to be assessed correspondingly. English, incidentally, finds itself enriched, momentarily at least, by the revival of the obsolete "bluntened".

Poetry occupies some fourteen pages out of the thirty-six of the issue. This would be a heartening sign in these unpoetic days were the work widely spread, but it seems to issue from only a few pens. Generally speaking, the Modern Muse is worshipped by the *Hermes* contributors, who seem most strongly influenced by Symbolist and Imagist notions, aiming to evoke and suggest moods and states rather than to rely on direct representation. There are notable exceptions: "Padruic's" satiric *Ballade*, which is quite a successful imitation of the artificial species, despite

Its unepatable caprice

(pour épater le bourgeois?); "M.K.'s" short descriptive piece beginning (how energetically but confusedly!)

The fevered pulses of the night
Are whipping up their horses . . .

where the sleeping owl and the waking clouds "coil" in unrehearsed unison; and Mr. A. G. Crawford's *To J.S.*, a light offering in the epigrammatic manner, and *The Colo*, a simple philosophical bush-study. The latter is not improved by the rhyming of "serenity" with "sky", nor by the metrical weakness of the second line of the couplet

Nor the doom of human sense
Dim the parrot's brilliance.

There is something of poetic definiteness also in "D.'s" "*Wake Diana with a Hymn . . .*", and in the two stanzas by "Ardan". These seem to be, indeed, the best poems of the collection, and give evidence of genuine poetic feeling and capacity for expression. Both catch, at times, in particular, something of a cadence, a colour, and a picturesqueness reminiscent of Keats. "D." is also appended to "*Dionysus has destroyed us: I've just found out*", a simple exercise in couplets with the import of a moral tale. The rhyming of "adulterer" with "were" is a notable blemish.

"Glaucón's" pieces, *Actæon* and *Of Passing*, are also not without distinction, despite a certain obscurity in the one and the presence of metaphysical and macabre connections and implications in the other.

Hyperbole and needs no trope, however, is a line whose cacophony does not appeal, and the influence of Donne, which is revived, directly or indirectly, so often in the moderns, is apparent throughout *Of Passing*.

For H. F. Stewart, the author of *Sonata*, Mr. Horne claims elsewhere and in another connection superiority to Keats as a poet. There is little in *Sonata* to confirm the claim. It is a good example of evocative Symbolism, capably meaningless, with many striking images, and an attempt to capture the harmonies of music. It is esoteric poetry, and to the hierophants we leave it. "D.R.H." reveals similar influences in two short poems. The second starts

She yields him earth, the monotone of growth,
But yet the torture etched upon his brain
Equivocates the warmth of summer rain,

and moves on to the stimulating but disharmonious

Of warm-breasted women in their sultry prime.

The point of "B.'s" *Ange Plein de Gateau* is not easy to see, but it is doubtless profound. The line

Lass, try the step instead

has its feet on earth at any rate.

The influence of the Metaphysicals, noted in "Glaucón's" *Of Passing*, reappears in *The Judgement*, by "H.", and even to some extent in its shorter and more comprehensible unnamed companion piece. The triplet stanzas of the longer piece are not "easy on the ear".

In all these poems it may be said generally there is not a little freshness, despite the adherence to modern methods and models. One feels through them something of the restlessness and disquietude of modern life in a civilization charged with high voltage. And yet an eremite could read through them, and indeed through the whole magazine, without suspecting the existence of that supremely important death-grapple of the nations of the world which one would expect to produce its effects upon creative literature as elsewhere. Perhaps it is because the movement normally lags after the impulse, and in any case the phenomenon is not peculiar to *Hermes*. One tribute of praise is deserved by all the versifiers equally: they employ simple metrical forms and have some feeling for rhythm and harmony. And their very earnestness is a virtue. Altogether, the prefatory Notice, apart from its confusion of legal relationships, is not justified in its prognostication of shocks for the reader. *Hermes* is much what one expects it to be, and its continued existence calls for no apology.

H. L. McLoskey.

AUSTRALIAN PRONUNCIATION.

The Pronunciation of English in Australia, by A. G. Mitchell.
Australian English Association, Sydney. 1940. 1s. 6d.

THE PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH IN AUSTRALIA is surely the first serious publication on this subject that is based on scientific principles. While not attempting to give a detailed account, Dr. Mitchell offers an outline of the main aspects of Australian speech, suggests lines for further investigation, and, every here and there, raises interesting side issues and makes challenging assertions.

At the outset he shows, with obvious relish, the absurdity of many current opinions on the subject. Though some of this needed stating, the long introduction—entertaining and skilful as it is—upsets the balance of the essay. Most of the space thus used might have been better spent in enlarging on many important items that are hardly more than mentioned.

Dr. Mitchell divides Australian speech into two classes, the "cultivated" and the "popular". While he hints that the latter may not be suitable for all circumstances, he writes refreshingly that "so long as it [language] serves the purpose for which it is used it has fulfilled its function. It is false to regard Australian popular speech as a debased form of educated speech. . . . Every man has the undeniable right to speak as he pleases." He goes on to express his belief, though he is open to conviction, that there are no local dialects. Though Dr. Mitchell emphasises that he has done no serious research in this subject, one must listen respectfully to his opinion, for he has the scientific attitude and seizes every opportunity for observation provided by the radio, visits to other States, discussion, etc. I should like to ask him, however, to look for signs of local developments in Queensland as there seems some slight reason to suspect a divergence there. A second interesting theory in this part of the essay is that there are no class dialects in Australian speech. Although there are certainly cases of well-educated people using the "popular" speech—and this may occur in Australia more than in other English-speaking countries—surprise is usually expressed when "educated professional or well-to-do people" *do* use the "popular" form. There is not, of course, as Dr. Mitchell says, the social diversity heard in England, but there may be more in Australia than he imagines.

The second section deals with the Australian vowels and diphthongs. Dr. Mitchell is at his best here. He asserts firstly that there is a certain real if not very obvious vowel shift in several of the simple vowels. And secondly that there are marked differences between English and "popular" Australian heard in the diphthongs in "tea", "too", "high", "how", "say", "so". He uses a phonetic alphabet

to show the differences. In all but one of the diphthongs the *extreme* "popular" variety is given, suggesting of course thereby, that any and every intermediate sound may be heard. Has Dr. Mitchell any subtle reason for the very *mild* variety given for "how" [æu]? Not only because the diphthong in "how" is one of the most frequently criticised sounds in Australian speech, but also to keep it in line with the rest, it too should be given with an *extreme* "popular" form, [eu] rather than [æu]. During this discussion Dr. Mitchell disposes of the Cockney myth by pointing out differences between Australian and Cockney, while admitting some similarities. He also deals neatly with the patter that because Australians say "bison" for "basin" listeners are confused.

The third section of the essay deals with attributes of the sounds. *Length* is disappointingly brief and needs elaboration and examples. More detail is offered about *Word-Stress*. Dr. Mitchell is probably right in his assertion that Australians "tend more than the English to avoid long series of unaccented syllables". But he should have made a wiser choice of examples to illustrate his point. "Thus", he goes on, "we commonly say a'pplicable, la'boratory, con'dolence, even ex'quisite, con'troversy." But according to Jones's "*An English Pronouncing Dictionary*" (1936 edition), the majority of Southern English people, too, say la'boratory, con'dolence ("rarely" 'condolence), while a'pplicable and con'troversy are accepted variants used by a minority. Furthermore, it is dangerous to be dogmatic about pronunciation in a country where the requisite evidence has not been collected. When I read "we commonly say . . . even ex'quisite" I can only reply that most of the speakers I have observed *do not*. *Intonation* is surely one of the most difficult of the attributes to analyse and record because it is so tantalisingly varied and elusive. Though English intonation has been investigated, there is a real need for research in Australian intonation. It is a difficult and exacting task, but one which can be confidently left with Dr. Mitchell if he will undertake it.

The final section is concerned with the distribution of sounds, and with the pronunciation of separate words. Dr. Mitchell is probably right in saying that the tendency to "spelling pronunciation" is stronger in Australia than in England. Australians in their isolation, in relatively small groups spread over large areas, may have recourse, when in doubt, to "spelling pronunciation". But in doing so they restrict the natural tendencies—there is a restraining, a more conservative influence. On the other hand, where there is no doubt about the pronunciation, it may also be true, as Dr. Mitchell says, that Australians are less conservative than the English. One wonders. The examples again are not helpful. "Dance" has [a] in English pronunciation, and [æ] it seems with the majority of Australians. And Jones gives "accomplish" with [p] ("rarely" with ^)! And if Dr.

Mitchell is right about "immediate" and "steadfast"—though I don't think he is—the inference would be that it is the *English* who are less conservative.

Throughout the whole essay matters are touched upon that are most stimulating to thought. One, that Australian variations had hardly begun to develop when conservative influences of modern times occurred. Another, a question about the early history of Australian speech. And another question concerning the general pitch of Australian speech.

I end with the hope that before long Dr. Mitchell will find the opportunity to write more on this subject; that he will expand the sections that he has hurried over, develop the points he has merely raised, and give us the fruits of his further investigations in those aspects of Australian speech that have in the past received scanty attention.

H. M. SYMONDS.

NOTES.

AMONG the many comments on *Southerly* made since the last issue are those of Dame Mary Gilmore and Miss Miles Franklin. As the opinions of such well-known Australian writers will be of interest to all, they are here reproduced, by permission.

Dame Mary Gilmore, in a letter to the Editor, wrote: ". . . as to Australian themes, apart from goannas and kangaroos, koalas and emus, all un-Australian because their use solely depends on their names, will you let me say a word? As you know I have for so long pleaded for a place, not alone in biology, history, and derisive or contemptuous writing, but in literature, for the continental fund of matter and inspiration that is aboriginal. And when I say literature I mean that creative, created, and essential thing that derives from a national root, and not from imitation, or duplication of other literatures. Man is the voice of his land. And in this we have, at present, to be one with the aboriginal if we are to have rugs to our (literary) beds, and a hearth for the fire. I belong to the past that counted its syllables [*vide* "Blood and Sand", in *Southerly*, Number 3, page 27. —Editors]. The past had to do that in order to be printed. But little by little we have moved, and now we are right out . . . where we ought to be, and in a time when there is almost no paper to print us! Still, there is *Southerly*, and *Southerly* is to loosen.

"No country in its primitive state had any richer lore than Australia. Love-making in the 'Loo has no more pretty speeches (taking the 'Loo as a symbol) than a blacks' camp—and no less. So

if we decorate our yokels with pretty love-words, why not our blacks? For we are taking a people, in each case, and not this or that ungodly ruffian. So, while I had to count my syllables in order to get a hearing, I wrote white man songs about black men as a means to an end, but knowing they were a foolish thing. And a foolish thing, not because life made them more applicable in one case and less in the other (for it did not), but because convention become folly had to be fought by equally foolish convention. It did what I wanted, for it opened the door a little. In my last book, *Battlefields*, I came nearer to what I wanted. . . . I sometimes think we are a bold but not a brave people. Boldness is of the appetites and the body, bravery of the mind. Intellectually we have not dared. We have gone into the surf holding the same old life-lines as the rest of the world. I mean as to literature—and music."

In a spoken review at a meeting of the Fellowship of Australian Writers on August 25, Miss Miles Franklin said:

"I had the pleasure of introducing to you the first issue of the quarterly *Southerly*, and hoped it wouldn't be a war casualty. Time is tearing away, so that there are two numbers since then. I'll just catch the coat-tails of the April one as it goes over the horizon, without apologies for being late; as in these days when magazines, if not killed bodily, have their spirits muzzled, and when others are squabashed in the pre-natal stage, we treasure any live *native* magazine, and hope this one will continue. There is a splendid poem by Robert Fitzgerald, *Duped Though We Were*. There are five verses; this is the fifth: 'When time the sharper, reached to thief', etc.

"There is also a review of four books of poetry, each by one of our well-known poets.

"I draw attention to an article by A. J. A. Waldock. In New York, Edna Kenton, whom I know, and others have taken *The Turn of the Screw*, a story respectably inhibitioned by Henry James, and pepped it up with an overdose of psycho-analysis. Henry James's work is much cry and little wool, as the devil said when he was shearing the pig, and the application to it of that kind of Freudianism that discerns in a dream about a cat or a snake the desire of one's grandfather's uncle for incestuous relations with one's aunt's cousin's mother is much more cry about less wool; so I am pleased that Mr. Waldock takes the issue by the wool and shakes it gently. I have resisted Freud as well as one can single-handed, because, despite a big contribution—evil or good—I believe that had his researches been conducted in the Middle West of America instead of in Middle Europe his findings wouldn't be so choked with flummery and frowsy whiskers.

"In this issue Mr. R. G. Howarth takes Sir Arthur Quiller Couch to task for patronising English literature and for his omissions from the *Oxford Book of Verse*. Mr. Howarth states that his inclusion of 'just one Australian piece, Kendall's "Mooni", is merely laughable'.

This is a gentlemanly wiggling, but I think it might have been good for what ails Sir Arthur, if earlier in his career he had met opposition of a different style—say, that of Susan Nipper.

"Now to the current issue for July. Here again are some of our well-known names—Henrietta Drake-Brockman, for example—and there are more good literary reviews. Now it appears that our Mr. Green has got himself into hot water by his criticism of Australian literature. This is a bit involuted. Mr. Randolph Hughes wrote a brochure on Brennan. Mr. Green dared to be himself and somewhat deprecatory of Mr. Hughes's idiosyncrasies. Fellowship people will remember the lively set-to between Mr. Hughes and Mr. P. R. Stephensen—a well matched combat. Mr. Randolph Hughes now goes for Mr. Green in a manner that shows that Mr. Stephensen's plain-speaking did not teach him anything. In his previous publication Mr. Hughes belaboured all us poor illiterates, who have not undergone a university, so violently and contemptuously that I was dying for an opportunity to point out that if he had not wasted so much energy on creatures so obnoxious and negligible, he could have improved his own document by deleting the 'of courses' which appeared so plentifully. Mr. Howarth now rebukes Mr. Hughes in a balanced and entertaining manner, and if he does not bring home to Mr. Hughes that there is something wrong with his literary manners, Mr. Hughes will have to be left to those who believe in prayer—if any.

"There is another delicious article about bad verse, also by Mr. Howarth. *A propos* the anthology of bad verse called *The Stuffed Owl*, Mr. Howarth suggests that the verse submitted in a competition in Australia would be suitable for a companion volume to be called *The Stuffed Mopoke*. The examples here given remind me of a jolly young fellow-traveller, a Queenslander, who used to amble up to people when they were at the pea-green-trimmed-with-yellow stage of sea sickness and say something irrelevant. He used to announce that the Prince of Wales was the most important man in the Empire to the Prince of Wales, but that to little Jimmy Dripping, little Jimmy Dripping was the most important fellow living, and if he wasn't, little Jimmy would be mud. That means that egotism is the only thing to keep us perpendicular—temerity, the motive power of the good old Australian willingness to give anything a fly, but in writing poetry or even doggerel Mr. Howarth suggests that a little talent as well as temerity is needed.

"In this issue are ten poems—some of them well worth while, to say the least. I am glad that the magazine is hospitable to poets. In these days we turn to poetry because the poet, however mistily, may spin us a rope to the stars, while the philosophers and scientists, with all their intellectual equipment, so frequently serve politicians to arm barbarians and build us broad roads to expedite our Gadarening."

Miss Franklin also drew attention, on this occasion, to *Ghosts of the Goldfields*, a volume written and published by H. H. Neary, which deals with the Turon diggings. She commended it as likely to be of value as source-material for future novelists.

Donations to the *Southerly* fund were made by the following: Professor E. R. Holme, Miss F. Earle Hooper, Mr. A. D. Hope, Mr. W. Lennard, Sir Mungo MacCallum, Mr. C. J. H. O'Brien, Mrs. J. Robinson, Professor A. J. A. Waldock.

Congratulations are offered to Mr. E. J. Dobson, formerly Tutor in English and Wentworth Travelling Fellow of the University, on his appointment to the English staff of Reading University. Mr. Dobson was an active member of the Association before his departure for Oxford in 1935, and has continued to take an interest in its work.

The Viking Press (Miss Bessie Mitchell, Box 2183 LL, G.P.O.) has just issued four booklets in its new "Prelude Series of Australian Poems". These are: *Kaleidoscope*, by Dorothy Auchterlounie; *The Map*, by Elisabeth Lambert; *The Breaking of the Drought*, by Harley Matthews; and *The Untrammelled*, by Betty Riddell. Each has decorations or ornaments by Bessie Mitchell. They will be reviewed in the next issue of *Southerly*. Copies may be obtained, at 2s. 6d. each, from Miss Mitchell and from leading booksellers. The proceeds from the sale of *The Breaking of the Drought* are to go to the Red Cross.

Some Modern Writers, a collection of public lectures by members of the Department of English at the University, has just been issued by the Australasian Medical Publishing Co. Ltd., Seamer Street, Glebe, and is obtainable there or from Mr. Oliver and Mr. Howarth at the University. The writers included are: Ezra Pound, Charles Morgan, A. E. Housman, James Joyce, Edith Sitwell, and T. S. Eliot.

Corrections.—Two errors in the last issue of *Southerly* need to be corrected: (1) in "A Dream", by "E", on page 4, "slides" in the last line should be "slide"—the subjunctive after "lest"; (2) "Priapus", in the final line of J. McAuley's poem, "Chorale", on page 10, is wrongly accented, the correct pronunciation being "Priápus". To meet this objection, the author would substitute for the line: "When the stars flimmer, and the bough is still."

The next issue of *Southerly* will appear in March or April of the coming year. Intending contributors are requested to send their material in by the end of February.

Mr. H. M. Green's annual review of Australian literature will be published in this issue.

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